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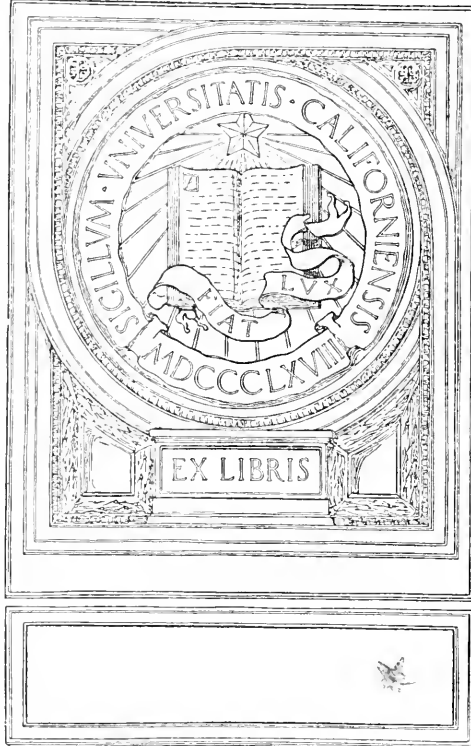
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SONNETS OF SHAKESPEARE

1609

FACSIMILE

LONDON  
HENRY FROWDE, M.A.  
PUBLISHER TO THE UNIVERSITY  
OF OXFORD



# SHAKESPEARES SONNETS

BEING A REPRODUCTION IN FACSIMILE OF

THE FIRST EDITION

1609

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WITH INTRODUCTION AND BIBLIOGRAPHY

BY

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# CONTENTS

	PAGE
INTRODUCTION TO SONNETS—	
I. General Characteristics . . . . .	7
II. Relation of Sonnets to the Early Plays . . .	18
III. The History of the Publication . . . . .	26
IV. The State of the Text . . . . .	40
V. Early Manuscript Copies and Reprints . . .	51
VI. A Census of Copies . . . . .	62
ILLUSTRATIVE TITLE-PAGE—	
The John Wright imprint of 1609 . . . . .	63
FACSIMILE OF THE EDITION OF 1609	



# I

THOUGH Shakespeare's sonnets are unequal in literary merit, many reach levels of lyric melody and meditative energy which are not to be matched elsewhere in poetry. Numerous lines like

General characteristics.

Gilding pale streams with heavenly alchemy  
or

When to the sessions of sweet silent thought  
seem to illustrate the perfection of human utterance. If a few of the poems sink into inanity beneath the burden of quibbles and conceits, others are almost overcharged with the mellowed sweetness of rhythm and metre, the depth of thought and feeling, the vividness of imagery, and the stimulating fervour of expression which are the finest fruits of poetic power.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This preface mainly deals with the bibliographical history of the sonnets, and the problems involved in the circumstances of their publication. In regard to the general significance of the poems—their bearing on Shakespeare's biography and character or their relations to the massive sonnet literature of the day, at home and abroad—I only offer here a few remarks and illustrations supplementary to what I have already written on these subjects in my *Life of Shakespeare*, fifth edition, 1905, or in the Introduction to the *Elizabethan Sonnets*, 1904 (Constable's reissue of Arber's English Garner). The abundant criticism which has been lavished on my already published comments has not modified my faith in the justice of my general position or in the fruitfulness of my general line of investigation. My friend Canon Beeching has, in reply to my strictures, ably restated the 'autobiographic' or 'literal' theory in his recent edition of the sonnets (1904), but it seems to me that he attaches insufficient weight to Shakespeare's habit of mind elsewhere, and to the customs and conventions of contemporary literature, especially to those which nearly touch the relations commonly subsisting among Elizabethan authors, patrons, and publishers. Canon Beeching's

The interpretation.

The sonnets, which number 154, are not altogether of homogeneous character. Several are detached lyrics of impersonal application. But the majority of them are addressed to a man, while more than twenty towards the end are addressed to a woman.<sup>1</sup> In spite of the vagueness of intention which envelops some of the poems, and the slenderness of the links which bind together many consecutive sonnets, the whole collection is well calculated to create the illusion of a series of earnest personal confessions. The collection has consequently been often treated as a self-evident excerpt from the poet's autobiography.

In the bulk of the sonnets the writer professes to describe his infatuation with a beautiful youth and his wrath with a disdainful mistress, who alienates the boy's affection and draws him into dissolute courses. But any strictly literal or autobiographic interpretation has to meet a formidable array of difficulties. Two general objections present themselves on the threshold of the discussion. In the first place, the autobiographic interpretation is to a large extent in conflict with the habit of mind and method of work which are disclosed in the rest of Shakespeare's achievement. In the second place, it credits the poet with humiliating experiences of which there is no hint elsewhere.

Shakespeare's dramatic habit of mind.

On the first point, little more needs saying than that Shakespeare's mind was dominated and engrossed by genius for drama, and that, in view of his supreme mastery of dramatic

comments on textual or critical points, which lie outside the scope of the controversy, seem to me acute and admirable.

<sup>1</sup> It is not clear from the text whether all the sonnets addressed to a man are inscribed to the same person. Mingled, too, with those addressed to a man, are a few which offer no internal evidence whereby the sex of the addressee can be determined, and, when detached from their environment, were invariably judged by seventeenth and eighteenth-century readers to be addressed to a woman.

power, the likelihood that any production of his pen should embody a genuine piece of autobiography is on *a priori* grounds small. Robert Browning, no mean psychologist, went as far as to assert that Shakespeare 'ne'er so little' at any point of his work left his 'bosom's gate ajar', and declared him incapable of unlocking his heart 'with a sonnet-key'. That the energetic fervour which animates many of Shakespeare's sonnets should bear the living semblance of private ecstacy or anguish, is no confutation of Browning's view. No critic of insight has denied all tie of kinship between the fervour of the sonnets and the passion which is portrayed in the tragedies. The passion of the tragedies is invariably the dramatic or objective expression, in the vividest terms, of emotional experience, which, however common in human annals, is remote from the dramatist's own interest or circumstance. Even his two narrative poems, as Coleridge pointed out, betray 'the utter aloofness of the poet's own feelings from those of which he is at once the painter and the analyst'. Certainly the intense passion of the tragedies is never the mere literal presentment of the author's personal or subjective emotional experience, nor does it draw sustenance from episodes in his immediate environment. The personal note in the sonnets may well owe much to that dramatic instinct which could reproduce intuitively the subtlest thought and feeling of which man's mind is capable.

The particular course and effect of the emotion, which Shakespeare portrayed in drama, were usually suggested or prescribed by some story in an historic chronicle or work of fiction. The detailed scheme of the sonnets seems to stand on something of the same footing as the plots of his plays. The sonnets weave together and develop with the finest poetic and dramatic sensibility themes which

had already served, with inferior effect, the purposes of poetry many times before. The material for the subject-matter and the suggestion of the irregular emotion of the sonnets lay at Shakespeare's command in much literature by other pens. The obligation to draw on his personal experiences for his theme or its development was little greater in his sonnets than in his dramas. Hundreds of sonneteers had celebrated, in the language of love, the charms of young men—mainly by way of acknowledging their patronage in accordance with a convention which was peculiar to the period of the Renaissance. Thousands of poets had described their sufferings at the hands of imperious beauty. Others had found food for poetry in stories of mental conflict caused by a mistress's infidelity or a friend's coolness.<sup>1</sup> The spur of example never failed to incite Shakespeare's dramatic muse to activity, and at no period of literary history was the presentation of amorous adventures more often essayed in sonnets than by Shakespeare's poetic contemporaries at home and abroad during the last decade of the sixteenth century. It goes without saying that Shakespeare had his own experience of the emotions incident to love and friendship or that that experience added point and colour to his verse. But his dramatic genius absolved him of the need

<sup>1</sup> The conflicts between the claims of friend and mistress on the affections, and the griefs incident to the transfer of a mistress's attentions to a friend—recondite topics which are treated in Shakespeare's sonnets—seem no uncommon themes of Renaissance poetry. Clement Marot, whose work was very familiar to Spenser and other Elizabethan writers, in complicated verse headed 'A celle qui souhaite Marot aussi amoureux d'elle qu'un sien Amy' (*Œuvres*, 1565?, p. 437), describes himself in a situation resembling that which Shakespeare assigns to the 'friend' of his sonnets. Being solicited in love by his comrade's mistress, Marot warns her of the crime against friendship to which she prompts him, and, less complacent than Shakespeare's 'friend', rejects her invitation on the ground that he has only half a heart to offer her, the other half being absorbed by friendship.



of seeking his cue there exclusively. It was not in his nature (to paraphrase Browning again) to write merely for the purpose of airing his private woes and perplexities.

Shakespeare acknowledged in his plays that 'the truest poetry is the most feigning'. The exclusive embodiment in verse of mere private introspection was barely known to his era, and in these words the dramatist paid an explicit tribute to the potency in poetic literature of artistic impulse and control contrasted with the impotency of personal sensation, which is scarcely capable of discipline. To few of the sonnets can a controlling artistic impulse be denied by criticism. The best of them rank with the richest and most concentrated efforts of Shakespeare's pen. To pronounce them, alone of his extant work, free of that 'feigning', which he identified with 'the truest poetry', is tantamount to denying his authorship of them, and to dismissing them from the Shakespearean canon.

The second general objection which is raised by the theory of the sonnets' autobiographic significance can be stated very briefly. A literal interpretation of the poems credits the poet with a moral instability which is at variance with the tone of all the rest of his work, and is rendered barely admissible by his contemporary reputation for 'honesty'. Of the 'pangs of despised love' for a woman, which he professes to suffer in the sonnets, nothing need be said in this connexion. But a purely literal interpretation of the impassioned protestations of affection for a 'lovely boy', which course through the sonnets, casts a slur on the dignity of the poet's name which scarcely bears discussion. Of friendship of the healthy manly type, not his plays alone, but the records of his biography, give fine and touching examples. All his dramatic writing, as well as his two narrative poems and the testimonies of his intimate associates in life, seems to prove

The alleged morbidity of the sonnets.

him incapable of such a personal confession of morbid infatuation with a youth, as a literal interpretation discovers in the sonnets.

The comparative study of sonnet literature.

It is in the light not merely of aesthetic appreciation but of contemporary literary history that Shakespeare's sonnets must be studied, if one hopes to reach any conclusions as to their precise significance which are entitled to confidence. No critic of his sonnets is justified in ignoring the contemporary literary influences to which Shakespeare, in spite of his commanding genius, was subject throughout his extant work. It is well to bear in mind that Elizabethan sonneteers, whose number was legion, habitually levied heavy debts not only on the great masters of this form of verse in Italy and France, who invented or developed it, but on contemporary foreign practitioners of ephemeral reputation. Nor should it be forgotten that the Elizabethan reading public repeatedly acknowledged a vein of artificiality in this naturalized instrument of English poetry, and pointed out its cloying tendency to fantastic exaggeration of simulated passion.<sup>1</sup>

Tasso and the language of love.

Of chief importance is it to realize that the whole vocabulary of affection—the commonest terms of endearment—often carried with them in Renaissance or Elizabethan poetry, and especially in Renaissance and Elizabethan sonnets, a poetic value that is wholly different from any that they bear to-day. The example of Tasso, the chief representative of the Renaissance on the continent of Europe in Shakespeare's day, shows with singular lucidity how the language of love was suffered deliberately to clothe the conventional relations of poet to

<sup>1</sup> Impatience was constantly expressed with the literary habit of 'Oiling a saint with supple sonneting', which was held to be of the essence of the Elizabethan sonnet (cf. J. D.'s *Epigrammes*, 1598, Sonnet II at end, headed 'Ignoto', and the other illustrations of contemporary criticism of sonnets in my *Life of Shakespeare*, pp. 111-12).

a helpful patron. Tasso not merely recorded in sonnets an apparently amorous devotion for his patron, the Duke of Ferrara, which is only intelligible in its historical environment, but he also carefully describes in prose the precise sentiments which, with a view to retaining the ducal favour, he sedulously cultivated and poetized. In a long prose letter to a later friend and patron, the Duke of Urbino, he wrote of his attitude of mind to his first patron thus<sup>1</sup>: 'I confided in him, not as we hope in men, but as we trust in God. . . . It appeared to me, so long as I was under his protection, fortune and death had no power over me. Burning thus with devotion to my lord, as much as man ever did with love to his mistress, I became, without perceiving it, almost an idolater. I continued in Rome and in Ferrara many days and months in the same attachment and faith.' With illuminating frankness Tasso added: 'I went so far with a thousand acts of observance, respect, affection, and almost adoration, that at last, as they say the courser grows slow by too much spurring, so his [i.e. the patron's] goodwill towards me slackened, because I sought it too ardently.' There is practical identity between the alternations of feeling which find touching voice in many of the sonnets of Shakespeare and those which colour Tasso's confession of his intercourse with his Duke of Ferrara. Both poets profess for a man a lover-like idolatry. Both attest the hopes and fears, which his favour evokes in them, with a fervour and intensity of emotion which it was only in the power of great poets to feign.

That the language of love was in common use in Elizabethan England among poets in their intercourse with those who appreciated and encouraged their literary genius, is convincingly illustrated by the mass of verse which was addressed

Poetic  
protestations  
of love for  
Queen  
Elizabeth.

<sup>1</sup> Tasso, *Opere*, Pisa, 1821-32, vol. xiii, p. 298.

to the greatest of all patrons of Elizabethan poetry—the Queen. The poets who sought her favour not merely commended the beauty of her mind and body with the semblance of amorous ecstasy; they carried their professions of ‘love’ to the extreme limits of realism. They seasoned their notes of adoration with reproaches of inconstancy and infidelity, which they couched in the peculiarly intimate vocabulary that is characteristic of genuinely thwarted passion.

Sir Walter  
Raleigh.

Sir Walter Raleigh offers especially vivid evidence of the assurance with which the poetic client offered his patron the homage of varied manifestations of amoristic sentiment. He celebrated his devotion to the Queen in a poem, called *Cynthia*, consisting of twenty-one books, of which only the last survives.<sup>1</sup> The tone of such portion as is extant is that of ecstatic love which is incapable of restraint. At one point the poet reflects

[How] that *the eyes of my mind* held her beams  
In every part transferred by *love's swift thought*;  
Far off or near, *in waking or in dreams*  
*Imagination strong their lustre brought.*  
Such force *her angelic appearance* had  
To *master distance*, time or cruelty.

Raleigh's simulated passion rendered him  
intensive, *wakeful*, and dismayed,  
In fears, *in dreams*, in feverous jealousy.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The date of Raleigh's composition is uncertain; most of the poem was probably composed about 1594. ‘Cynthia’ is the name commonly given the Queen by her poetic admirers. Spenser, Barnfield, and numerous other poets accepted the convention.

<sup>2</sup> With some of the italicized words, passages in Shakespeare's sonnets may be compared, e. g. :—

XXVII. 9–10. . . . my soul's imaginary sight  
Presents thy shadow to my sightless view.  
XLIII. 11–12. When in dead night thy fair imperfect shade  
Through heavy sleep on sightless eyes doth stay.

The obsequious dependant and professional suitor declares himself to be a sleepless lover, sleepless because of the cruelty

XLIV. 1-2. If the dull substance of my flesh were thought,  
Injurious distance should not stop my way.

LXI. 1-2. Is it thy will thy image should keep open  
My heavy eyelids to the weary night?

Similarly Spenser wrote of Queen Elizabeth in 1591 in his *Colin Clouts come home againe* with a warmth that must mislead any reader who closes his ears and eyes to the current conventions of amorous expression. Here are some of his assurances of regard (ll. 472-80):—

To her my thoughts I daily dedicate,  
To her my heart I nightly martyrize:  
To her my love I lowly do prostrate,  
To her my life I wholly sacrifice:  
My thought, my heart, my love, my life is she,  
And I hers ever only, ever one:  
One ever I all vowed hers to be,  
One ever I and others never none.

As in Raleigh's case, Spenser draws attention to his sufferings as his patron's lover by night as well as by day. To take a third of a hundred instances that could be adduced of the impassioned vein of poetic addresses to Queen Elizabeth, Richard Barnfield wrote a volume of poems called (like Raleigh's poem) *Cynthia*, in honour of his sovereign (published in 1595). In a prefatory address he calls the Queen 'his mistress'. Much high-strung panegyric follows, and he reaches his climax of adoring affection in a brief ode attached to the main poem. There he describes how, after other adventures in the fields of love, 'Eliza' has finally written her name on his heart 'in characters of crimson blood'. Her fair eyes have inflicted on him a fatal wound. The common note of familiarity in a poet's addresses to patrons is well illustrated by the fluency of style in which Barnfield professes his affection for the Queen:—

Her it is, for whom I mourne;  
Her, for whom my life I scorne;  
Her, for whom I weepe all day;  
Her, for whom I sigh, and say,  
Either She, or els no creature,  
Shall enioy my loue: whose feature  
Though I neuer can obtaine,  
Yet shall my true loue remaine:  
Till (my body turned to clay)  
My poore soule must passe away,  
To the heauens; where (I hope)  
Hit shall finde a resting scope:  
Then since I loued thee (alone)  
Remember me when I am gone.

of his mistress in refusing him her old favours. In vain he tries to blot out of his mind the joys of her past kindness and to abandon the hopeless pursuit of her affection. He is 'a man distract', who, striving and raging in vain to free himself from strong chains of love, merely suffers 'change of passion from woe to wrath'. The illusion of genuine passion could hardly be produced with better effect than in lines like these:—

The thoughts of past times, *like flames of hell*,  
Kindled afresh within my memory  
The many dear achievements that befell  
In those prime years and infancy of love.

It was in the vein of Raleigh's addresses to the Queen that Elizabethan poets habitually sought, not her countenance only, but that of her noble courtiers. Great lords and great ladies alike—the difference of sex was disregarded—were repeatedly assured by poetic clients that their mental and physical charms excited in them the passion of love. Protestations of affection, familiarly phrased, were clearly encouraged in their poetic clients by noble patrons.<sup>1</sup> Nashe, a typical Elizabethan, who was thoroughly impregnated with the spirit and temper of the times, bore (in 1595) unqualified witness to the poetic practice when he wrote of Gabriel Harvey, who religiously observed all current conventions in his relations with patrons:—

Harvey's  
love-poems  
to Sir Philip  
Sidney.

‘I haue perused vearses of his, written vnder his owne hand to *Sir Philip Sidney*, wherein he courted him as he were another Cyparissus or Ganimede; the last *Gordian* true loues knot or knitting up of them is this:—

<sup>1</sup> The two sonnets which accompanied Nashe's gift to the young Earl of Southampton of an obscene poem called *The choosing of Valentines*, sufficiently indicate the tone of intimacy which often infected 'the dedicated words which writers used' when they were seeking or acknowledging patrons' favours.

Sum iecur, ex quo te primum, Sydneie, vidi;  
Os oculosque regit, cogit amare iecur.

*All liver am I, Sidney, since I saw thee;  
My mouth, eyes, rule it and to loue doth draw mee.*<sup>1</sup>

All the verse, which Elizabethan poets conventionally affirmed to be fired by an amorous infatuation with patrons, was liable to the like biting sarcasm from the scoffer.<sup>2</sup> But no satiric censure seemed capable of stemming the tide of passionate adulation, in what Shakespeare himself called 'the liver vein', which in his lifetime flowed about the patrons of Elizabethan poetry. Until comparatively late in the seventeenth century there was ample justification for Sir Philip Sidney's warning of the flattery that awaited those who patronized poets and poetry: 'Thus doing you shall be [hailed as] most fair, most rich, most wise, most all; thus doing, you shall dwell upon superlatives; thus doing, your soul shall be placed with Dante's Beatrice.' There can be little doubt that Shakespeare, always prone to follow the contemporary fashion, yielded to the prevailing tendency and penned many sonnets in that 'liver vein' which was especially calculated to fascinate the ear of his literature-loving and self-indulgent patron, the Earl of Southampton. The illusion of passion which colours his verse was beyond the scope of other contemporary 'idolaters' of patrons, because it was a manifestation of his superlative and ever-active dramatic power.

<sup>1</sup> 'Have with you to Saffron-Walden' (O 3 verso), in Nashe's *Works*, ed. McKerrow, vol. iii, p. 92.

<sup>2</sup> On the conventional sonnet of adoration Shakespeare himself passed derisively the same sort of reflection as Nashe when, in *Love's Labour's Lost* (iv. 3. 74 seq.), he bestows on a love-sonnet the comment:—

*This is the liver vein, which makes flesh a deity,  
A green goose a goddess; pure, pure idolatry.  
God amend us, God amend! we are much out of the way.*

## II

Date of the  
sonnets.

IT is not known for certain when Shakespeare's sonnets were written. They were probably produced at various dates, but such external evidence as is accessible assigns the majority of them to a comparatively early period of Shakespeare's career, to a period antecedent to 1598. Internal evidence is on this point very strongly corroborative of the external testimony. The language and imagery of the sonnets closely connects them with the work which is positively known to have occupied Shakespeare before 1595 or 1596. The passages and expressions which are nearly matched in plays of a later period are not unimportant, but they are inferior in number to those which find a parallel in the narrative poems of 1593 and 1594, or in the plays of similar date. Again, only a few of the parallels in the later work are so close in phrase or sentiment as those in the earlier work.<sup>1</sup>

The plea for  
marriage.

Two leading themes of the sonnets are very closely associated with Shakespeare's poem of *Venus and Adonis* and the plays that were composed about the same date. The first seventeen poems, in which the poet urges a beautiful youth to marry, and to bequeath his beauty to posterity, repeat with somewhat greater exuberance, but with no variation of sentiment, the plea that Venus thrice fervently

<sup>1</sup> Almost every play of Shakespeare offers some parallels to expressions in the sonnets. Canon Beeching (pp. xxv-xxvii) has collected several (which are of great interest) from *Henry IV* and *Hamlet*, but they are not numerous enough to justify any very large conclusion. It does not seem to have been noticed that the words 'Quietus' (*Hamlet*, iii. 1. 75, and *Sonnet* CXXVI. 12) and 'My prophetic soul' (*Hamlet*, i. 5. 40, and *Sonnet* CVII. 1) come in *Hamlet* and the sonnets, and nowhere else. The sonnets in which they occur may be of comparatively late date, but the evidence is not conclusive in itself.



urges on Adonis in Shakespeare's poem (cf. ll. 129-32, 162-74, 1751-68). The plea is again developed by Shakespeare in *Romeo and Juliet*, i. 1. 218-28. Elsewhere he only makes slight and passing allusion to it—viz. in *All's Well*, i. 1. 136, and in *Twelfth Night*, i. 5. 273-5. The bare treatment, which the subject receives in these comparatively late plays, notably contrasts with the fullness of exposition in the earlier passages.<sup>1</sup>

An almost equally prominent theme of Shakespeare's sonnets—the power of verse to 'eternize' the person whom it commemorated—likewise suggests early composition. The conceit is of classical origin, and is of constant recurrence in Renaissance poetry throughout Western Europe. The French poet, Ronsard, never tired of repeating it in the odes and sonnets which he addressed to his patrons, and Spenser, Daniel, and Drayton, among Elizabethan poets, emulated his example with energy. Shakespeare presents the theme in much the same fashion as his English contemporaries, and borrows an occasional phrase from poems by them, which were in print before 1594. But the first impulse to adopt the proud boast seems to have come from his youthful study of Ovid. Of all Latin poets, Ovid gave the pretension most frequent and most frank expression. *Sonnet* LV, where Shakespeare handles the conceit with

The  
eternizing  
faculty of  
verse.

<sup>1</sup> Nothing was commoner in Renaissance literature than for a literary client to urge on a patron the duty of transmitting to future ages his charms and attainments. The plea is versified in Sir Philip Sidney's *Arcadia* (bk. iii) in the addresses of the old dependant Geron to his master Prince Histor, and in Guarini's *Pastor Fido* (1585) in the addresses of the old dependant Linco to his master the hero Silvio. Chapman dwells on the theme in an address to his patron the Duke of Lennox, in his translation of Homer's *Iliad* (of which the publication began in 1598):—

None ever lived by self-love; others' good  
Is th' object of our own. They living die  
That bury in themselves their fortunes' brood.

gorgeous effect, assimilates several lines from the exultant outburst at the close of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. To that book, which Shakespeare often consulted, he had especial recourse when writing *Venus and Adonis*. Moreover, a second work of Ovid was also at Shakespeare's hand, when his first narrative poem was in process of composition. The Latin couplet, which Shakespeare quoted on the title-page of *Venus and Adonis*, comes from that one of Ovid's *Amores* (or 'Elegies of Love') in which the Latin poet with fiery vehemence expatiates on the eternizing faculty of verse.<sup>1</sup> Ovid's vaunt in his 'Elegies' had clearly caught Shakespeare's eye when he was engaged on *Venus and Adonis*, and the impression seems to be freshly reflected in Shakespeare's treatment of the topic through the sonnets.<sup>2</sup>

The sonnets  
and *Love's*  
*Labour's*  
*Lost*.

No internal evidence as to the chronological relations of two compositions from the same poet's pen is open to less dispute than that which is drawn from the tone and texture of the imagery and phraseology. The imagery and

<sup>1</sup> To the many instances I have adduced of the handling of this topic by Spenser and other Elizabethan poets, may be added this stanza from Roydon's *Elegie* on Sir Philip Sidney, where he refers to the sonnets which Sidney, in the name of Astrophel, addressed to Lady Rich, in the name of Stella :—

Then Astrophill hath honour'd thee [i.e. Stella];  
For when thy body is extinct,  
Thy graces shall eternall be,  
And live by vertue of his inke;  
For by his verses he doth give  
To short-livde beautie aye to live.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *Mortale est, quod quaeris, opus; mihi fama perennis*  
*Quaeritur, in toto semper ut orbe canar.*

(Ovid's 'Amores', i. xv. 7-8.)

The *Venus and Adonis* motto is immediately preceded in Ovid's 'Amores' (i. xv. 35-6) by these lines :—

Ergo cum silices, cum dens patientis aratri,  
Depereant aevo, carmina morte carent.  
Cedant carminibus reges regumque triumphi,  
Cedat et auriferi ripa benigna Tagi. (31-4.)

phraseology of great poets suffer constant flow. Their stores are continually replenished in the course of their careers. Whenever, therefore, any really substantial part of the imagery and phraseology in two or more works is of identical tone and texture, no doubt seems permissible that they belong to the same epoch in the poet's career. Application of these principles to Shakespeare's sonnets can lead to no other result than that the bulk of them are of the same date as the earliest plays.

Probably Shakespeare's earliest comedy, *Love's Labour's Lost*, offers a longer list of parallels to the phraseology and imagery of the sonnets than any other of his works.<sup>1</sup> The details in the resemblance—the drift of style and thought—confirm the conclusion that most of the sonnets belong to the same period of the poet's life as the comedy. Longaville's regular sonnet in the play (iv. 3. 60-73) closely catches the tone that is familiar to readers of Shakespeare's great collection. Like thirty-four of Shakespeare's collected quatorzains, it begins with the rhetorical question:—

Did not the heavenly rhetoric of thine eye,  
'Gainst whom the world cannot hold argument,  
Persuade my heart to this false perjury?  
Vows for thee broke deserve not punishment.

But apart from syntactical or metrical forms, the imagery in *Love's Labour's Lost* is often almost identical with that of the sonnets.

The lyric image of sun-worship in *Sonnet VII.* 1-4:—

Lo, in *the Orient* when the gracious light  
Lifts up his burning head, each under eye

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Mr. C. F. McClumpha's papers on the relation of the sonnets (1) with *Love's Labour's Lost*, and (2) with *Romeo and Juliet*, respectively, in *Modern Language Notes*, vol. xv, No. 6, June, 1900, pp. 337-46, and in *Shakespeare-fabrbuch*, xl. pp. 187 seq. (Weimar, 1904).

*Doth homage* to his new-appearing sight,  
Serving with *looks* his *sacred* majesty,

reappears in heightened colour in Biron's speech in *Love's Labour's Lost* (iv. 3. 221-8):—

Who sees the heavenly Rosaline,  
That like a rude and savage man of Inde,  
At the first opening of *the gorgeous East*,  
Bows not *his vassal head*, and stricken blind  
Kisses the base ground with obedient breast?  
What peremptory eagle-sighted eye  
*Dares look upon the heaven* of her brow,  
That is not *blinded by her majesty*?

Only here and in another early play—*Romeo and Juliet*—is the imagery of sun-worship brought by Shakespeare into the same relief.<sup>1</sup>

Another conceit which Shakespeare develops persistently, in almost identical language, in both the sonnets and *Love's Labour's Lost*, is that the eye is the sole source of love, the exclusive home of beauty, the creator, too, of strange delusions in the minds of lovers.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Romeo and Juliet*, i. 1. 124-5:

*the worshipp'd sun*  
Peer'd forth the *golden* window of the east.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *Sonnet* xiv. 9:

But *from thine eyes* my knowledge I derive.

*L. L. L.* iv. 3. 350:

*From women's eyes* this doctrine I derive, &c.

*Sonnet* xvii. 5-6:

If I could write the *beauty* of your eyes  
And in *fresh numbers* number all your graces.

*L. L. L.* iv. 3. 322-3:

Such *fiery numbers* as the prompting eyes  
Of *beauty's* tutors have enriched you with.

Cf. again *Sonnet* cxiv. 2-7 with *L. L. L.* v. 2. 770-5. For a curious parallel use of the law terms 'several' and 'common' see *Sonnet* cxxxvii. 9, 10, and *L. L. L.* ii. 1. 223.

Furthermore, the taunts which Biron's friends address to him on the black or dark complexion of his lady love, Rosaline, are in phrase and temper at one with Shakespeare's addresses to his 'dark lady' in the sonnets. In the comedy and in the poems Shakespeare plays precisely the same fantastic variations on the conventional controversy of Renaissance lyrists, whether a black complexion be a sign of virtue or of vice.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Hardly briefer is the list of similarities of phrase and image offered by Shakespeare's earliest romantic tragedy *Romeo and Juliet*. The following four examples are representative of many more :—

*Son.* xxv. 5-6 : *their fair leaves spread*  
But as the marigold *at the sun's eye*.

*Rom. and Jul.* i. i. 157-8 :  
[bud] can *spread his sweet leaves* to the air,  
Or dedicate his beauty *to the sun*.

*Son.* xcvi. 2-3 :  
When *proud-pied April, dress'd in all his trim*,  
Hath put *a spirit of youth* in everything.

*Rom. and Jul.* i. 2. 26-7 :  
Such comfort as do *lusty young men feel*  
*When well-apparell'd April . . .*

*Son.* cxxxvi. 8-9 :  
*Among a number one is reckon'd none :*  
*Then in the number let me pass untold.*

*Rom. and Jul.* i. 2. 32-3 :  
*Which on more view of many, mine being one*  
*May stand in number, though in reckoning none.*

*Son.* lxxxiv. 5-6 :  
Lean penury within *that pen* doth dwell  
That *to his subject* lends not some small glory.

*Rom. and Jul.* i. 3. 70-1 :  
*That book* in many eyes doth share the glory  
That in gold clasps locks in the golden story.

One of the most perfect utterances of the sonnets (XXXIII. 4), the description of the glorious morning sun,

*Gilding pale streams with heavenly alchemy,*

Words  
peculiar to  
sonnets and  
early plays.

At many points, characteristic features of Shakespeare's vocabulary in the sonnets are as intimately associated with the early plays as the imagery. Several uncommon yet significant words in the sonnets figure in early plays and nowhere else. Such are the epithet 'dateless', which is twice used in the sonnets—XXX. 6 and CLIII. 6, and is only used twice elsewhere, in two early plays, *Richard II*, i. 3. 151, and *Romeo and Juliet*, v. 3. 115<sup>1</sup>; the two words 'compile' (LXXVIII. 9), or 'compil'd' (LXXXV. 2), and 'filed' (in the sense of 'polished'), which only appear in the sonnets and in *Love's Labour's Lost* (iv. 3. 134; v. 2. 52 and 896; v. i. 12); the participial 'Out-worn' in sonnets LXIV. 2 'Out-worn buried age', and LXVIII. 1 'days out-worn', which is only met with in *Lucrece*, 1350, 'the worn-out age', and 1761, 'time out-worn'; the epithet 'world-without-end', *Sonnet* LVII. 5, which is only found elsewhere in *Love's Labour's Lost*, v. 2. 799; 'wires' for 'hair' (CXXX, 4), a favourite word with Elizabethan sonneteers between 1590 and 1597, which is only found elsewhere in the epithet 'wiry' for 'hairy' in *King John*, iii. 4. 64; and 'idolatry' ('Let not my love be called idolatry') in CV. 1, which is used elsewhere in five plays<sup>2</sup>—one alone, *Troilus and Cressida* (ii. 2. 56), being of later period.

is closely akin to the lines in yet another early play, *Midsummer Night's Dream*, iii. 2. 391-3, where we read how

the Eastern gate, all fiery red,  
Opening on Neptune with fair blessed beams,  
Turns into yellow gold his salt-green streams.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Son.* xxx. 6:

For precious friends hid in death's dateless night.

*Rom. and Jul.* v. 3. 115:

A dateless bargain to engrossing death!

<sup>2</sup> Viz. *Two Gentlemen*, iv. 4. 207; *Love's Labour's Lost*, iv. 3. 75; *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, i. 1. 109; *Romeo and Juliet*, ii. 2. 114; and *Troilus and Cressida*, ii. 2. 56.

Three rare words which testify to Shakespeare's French reading—'rondure' (XXI. 8), 'couplement' (XXI. 5), and 'carcanet', i.e. necklace (LII. 8)—are only found elsewhere respectively in *King John*, ii. 1. 259, in *Love's Labour's Lost*, v. 2. 535, and in *Comedy of Errors*, iii. 1. 4.

One or two quotations or adaptations of lines of the sonnets in work by other pens, bring further testimony to the comparatively early date of composition. In these instances the likelihood that Shakespeare was the borrower is very small. The whole line (XCIV. 14)—

Early  
borrowing  
from the  
sonnets.

Lilies that fester smell far worse than weeds  
appeared before 1595 in the play of 'Edward III' (ii. 1. 451), together with several distinctive phrases.<sup>1</sup> The poet Barnfield, who, in poems published in that and the previous year, borrowed with great freedom from *Venus and Adonis* and *Lucrece*, levied loans on the sonnets at the same time.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Two are especially noteworthy, viz. 'scarlet ornaments', of the lips or cheeks (*Son.* CXLIII. 6 and *Edw.* III, ii. 1. 10), and 'flatter', applied to the effect of sunlight (*Son.* XXXIII. 2 and *Edw.* III, i. 2. 142).

<sup>2</sup> In *Sonnet* LXXXV Shakespeare uses together the rare words 'compiled' and 'filed' (in the sense of 'polished') when he writes of

comments of your *praise*, richly *compiled*, . . .

And precious phrase by all the Muses *filed*.

Barnfield, in his *Cassandra*, which was ready for publication in January, 1595, writes on the same page of his heroine's lover that 'his tongue *compiles* her *praise*', and subsequently of 'her *filed* tongue'. The collocation of the expressions is curious. Barnfield's descriptions in his *Affectionate Shepheard* (1594) of his youth's 'amber locks trust up in golden tramels', 'which dangle adowne his louely cheekes', with the poet's warning of 'th' indecencie of mens long haire', and the appeal to the boy, 'Cut off thy Locke, and sell it for gold wier' (*Affectionate Shepheard*, I. ii; II. xix, xxiii), may comment on Shakespeare's sonnet LXVIII, where the youth is extravagantly complimented on the beauty of his 'golden tresses', which 'show false art what beauty was of yore'. In Shakespeare's sonnet XCVIII, lines 8-12—

Nor did I wonder at the lily's *white*,  
Nor praise *the deep vermilicon* in the rose;  
They were but sweet, but figures of delight,  
Drawn after you, you pattern of all those,

In two sonnets (published in Jan. 1595) Barnfield depreciated the beauty of heroes of antiquity compared with his own fair friend. *Sonnet XII* begins:—

Some talke of Ganymede th' Idalian Boy  
And some of faire *Adonis* make their boast,  
Some talk of him [i.e. Castor], whom louely *Laeda*  
[i.e. mother of Helen] lost . . .

*Sonnet XVII* opens:—

Cherry-lipt *Adonis* in his snowie shape,  
Might not compare with his pure Iuorie white.

Both seem crude echoes of Shakespeare's sonnet *LIII*:—

Describe Adonis, and the counterfeit  
Is poorly imitated after you.

### III

The  
sonnets  
in private  
circulation.

ALL occasional poetry, and especially poetry for patrons 'in the liver vein', was usually 'kept in private' in the

possibly reflect Barnfield's lines in the *Affectionate Shepherd* (I. iii):—

His *Iuory-white* and Alabaster skin  
Is stained throughout with *rare Vermillion red*.  
But *as* the *Lillie* and the blushing *Rose*,  
So white and red on him in order grows.

It is curious to note that this is the only place in all his works where Shakespeare uses the word 'vermilion'. It is not uncommon in Elizabethan literature; cf. Sidney's *Astrophel*, cii. 5, 'vermillion dyes'; Daniel's *Rosamond* (1592), l. 678, 'vermillion red' (of roses); J. C.'s *Alcilia* (1596), 'vermillion hue' (in Elizabethan Longer Poems, p. 361). But it is far more frequent in sixteenth-century French and Italian poetry (*vermeil* and *vermiglio*). It is used in all the early Italian poems concerning Venus and Adonis which were accessible to Shakespeare. Cf. Dolce's *La Favola d'Adone*, iv. 7:—

Quivi tra Gigli le *vermiglie* Rose  
Si dimostrano ogn' hor liete e vezzose.

In both Dolce's *La Favola d'Adone* (83. 8) and Tarchagnota's *L'Adone* (72. 6 and 74. 2) Adonis' dead body is metamorphosed into 'uno *vermiglio* fiore' or 'quel fior *vermiglio*', the flower assuming 'vermiglio color del sangue'.



Elizabethan era. It was 'held back from publishing'. It circulated only among the author's or the patron's friends. The earliest known reference to the existence of any collection of sonnets by Shakespeare indicates that he followed the fashion in writing them exclusively for private audiences.<sup>1</sup>

In 1598 the critic, Francis Meres, by way of confirming the statement that 'the sweet, witty soul of Ovid lives in mellifluous and honey-tongued Shakespeare', called to '*witness* his *Venus and Adonis*, his *Lucrece*, his sugared *Sonnets* among his private friends etc.' There can be little question that Meres refers to sonnets by Shakespeare which were in circulation among his private friends, and were, in the critic's mind, chiefly distinguished from Shakespeare's two narrative poems by being unpublished and in private hands.<sup>2</sup> Meres' language is too vague to press very closely. The use of the common and conventional epithet 'sugared' suggests that Shakespeare's sonnets were credited by the writer with the ordinary characteristics of the artificial sonneteering of the day.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Of the specimens of adulatory verse to which reference has been made above, neither the work of Raleigh, nor of Nashe, nor of Harvey was printed in the authors' lifetime. Harvey's confession of love for Sir Philip Sidney is not known to be extant. The manuscript copies in which Raleigh's and Nashe's verse declared their passion for their patrons were printed for the first time in our own day.

<sup>2</sup> Manuscript poems written for and circulating among an Elizabethan poet's friends rarely reached his own hand again. In 1593 the veteran poet, Thomas Churchyard, when enumerating in his *Challenge* unpublished pieces by himself which had been 'gotten from me of some such noble *friends* as I am loath to offend', includes in his list '*an infinite number of other Songes and Sonets*, giuen where they cannot be recovered, nor purchase any fauour when they are craued'.

<sup>3</sup> The conventional epithet 'sugared' was often applied to poetry for patrons. In the *Returne from Parnassus* (1600?), a poverty-stricken scholar, who seeks the favour of a rich patron, is counselled to give the patron 'some *sugar candy* tearms' (ll. 1377-8), while to the patron's son 'shall thy piping poetry and *sugar* endes of verses be directed' (l. 1404). In the same piece (l. 243) Daniel was congratulated on his '*sugared sonnetting*'. Cf. '*sugred*

Meres' evidence as to the 'private' circulation of a number of Shakespeare's sonnets in 1598 received the best possible corroboration a year later, when two sonnets, which were undoubtedly by Shakespeare, were printed for the first time in the poetic miscellany, *The Passionate Pilgrim*. That volume was compiled piratically by the publisher, William Jaggard, from 'private' manuscripts, and although its contents were from various pens, all were ascribed collectively to Shakespeare on the title-page.

There are indications that separate sonnets by Shakespeare continued to be copied and to circulate in MS. in the years that immediately followed. But ten years elapsed before Shakespeare's sonnets were distinctly heard of in public again. Then as many as 154 were brought together and were given to the world in a quarto volume.<sup>1</sup>

The publica-  
tion of the  
sonnets.

On May 20, 1609, the grant of a licence for the publication of Shakespeare's sonnets was thus entered in the Registers of the Stationers' Company: 'Entred [to Thomas Thorpe] for his copie vnder th' andes of master Wilson and master Lownes Warden, a Booke called Shakespeares *sonnettes* vj<sup>d</sup>.'

A knowledge of the career and character of Thomas Thorpe, who was owner of the copyright and caused the sonnets to be published, is needful to a correct apprehension

talk', Fletcher's *Licia*, 1593, Sonnet 52, l. 1; 'sugred terms', R. L.'s *Diella*, 1596, Sonnet 4; 'Master Thomas Watson's *sugred* Amintas' in Nashe's preface to Greene's *Menaphon*, 1589. 'Sucre' is similarly used in French literature of the same date.

<sup>1</sup> Eleazar Edgar, a small publisher, who took up his freedom on June 26, 1597, obtained from the Stationers' Company on January 3, 1600, a licence for the publication of '*Amours*, by J. D., with Certen Oy<sup>r</sup> (i.e. other) sonnetes by W. S.' No book corresponding to this title seems to have been published. There is small ground for identifying the W. S. of this licence with Shakespeare. There was another sonneteer of the day, William Smith, who had published a collection of sonnets under the title of *Chloris*, in 1596. Edgar may have designed the publication of another collection by Smith.

of the manner in which they reached the printing-press or to a right apprehension of the order in which they were presented to the reading public. The story has many points of resemblance with that of William Jaggard's publication of *The Passionate Pilgrim* in 1599.

Thorpe, a native of Barnet in Middlesex, where his father kept an inn, was at Midsummer, 1584, apprenticed for nine years to an old-established London printer and stationer, Richard Watkins, whose business premises were at the sign of Love and Death in St. Paul's Churchyard. Nearly ten years later he took up the freedom of the Stationers' Company. He seems to have become a stationer's assistant. Fortune rarely favoured him, and he held his own with difficulty for some thirty years in the lowest ranks of the London publishing trade.

Thorpe's  
early life.

In 1600 there fell into his hands a 'private' written copy of Marlowe's unprinted translation of the first book of *Lucan*. Thorpe, who was not destitute of a taste for literature—he knew scraps of Latin and recognized a good MS. when he saw one—interested in his find Edward Blount<sup>1</sup>, then a stationer's assistant like himself, but with better prospects. Through Blount's good offices, Peter Short printed Thorpe's MS. of Marlowe's *Lucan*, and Walter Burre sold it at his shop in St. Paul's Churchyard.

His ownership  
of the  
manuscript  
of Marlowe's  
*Lucan*.

As owner of the MS., Thorpe chose his patron and supplied the dedicatory epistle. The patron of his choice was his friend Blount. The style of the dedication was somewhat flamboyant, but Thorpe showed a literary sense

His  
dedicatory  
address to  
Edward  
Blount in  
1600.

<sup>1</sup> Blount had already achieved a modest success in the same capacity of procurer or picker-up of neglected 'copy'. In 1598 he became proprietor of Marlowe's unfinished and unpublished *Hero and Leander*, and found among better-equipped friends in the trade both a printer and a publisher for his treasure-trove.

when he designated Marlowe 'that pure elemental wit', and a good deal of dry humour in offering to 'his kind and true friend', Blount, 'some few instructions' whereby he might accommodate himself to the unaccustomed rôle of patron. Thorpe gives a sarcastic description of a typical patron. 'When I bring you the book,' he advises Blount, 'take physic and keep state. Assign me a time by your man to come again. . . . Censure scornfully enough and somewhat like a traveller. Commend nothing lest you discredit your (that which you would seem to have) judgment. . . . One special virtue in our patrons of these days I have promised myself you shall fit excellently, which is to give nothing.' Finally Thorpe, adopting the conventional tone, challenges his patron's *love* 'both in this and, I hope, many more succeeding offices'.

Three years later he was able to place his own name on the title-page of two humbler literary prizes—each an insignificant pamphlet on current events. Thenceforth for a dozen years his name reappeared annually on one, two, or three volumes. After 1614 his operations were few and far between, and they ceased altogether in 1624. He seems to have ended his days in poverty, and has been identified with the Thomas Thorpe who was granted an alms-room in the hospital of Ewelme, Oxfordshire, on December 3, 1635.

Character of  
his business.

Thorpe was associated with the publication of twenty-nine volumes in all, including Marlowe's *Lucan*; but in almost all his operations his personal energies were confined, as in his initial enterprise, to procuring the manuscript. For a short period in 1608 he occupied a shop, the Tiger's Head, in St. Paul's Churchyard, and the fact was duly announced on the title-pages of three publications which he issued in that year. But his other undertakings were described on their

title-pages as printed for him by one stationer and sold for him by another, and when any address found mention at all, it was the shopkeeper's address, and not his own. He merely traded in the 'copy', which he procured how he could—in a few cases by purchase from the author, but in more cases through the irregular acquisition of a 'private' transcript of a work that was circulating at large and was not under the author's 'protection'.<sup>1</sup> He never enjoyed in permanence the profits or dignity of printing his 'copy' at a press of his own, or selling books on premises of his own. In this homeless fashion he pursued the well-understood profession of procurer of 'dispersed transcripts' for a longer period than any other known member of the Stationers' Company.

Besides Thorpe, there were actively engaged in the publication of the first edition of Shakespeare's sonnets the printer George Eld and two booksellers, John Wright and William Aspley, who undertook the sale of the impression. The booksellers arranged that one-half of the copies should bear one of their names in the imprint, and the other half should bear the other's name. The even distribution of the two names on the extant copies suggests that the edition was precisely halved between the two. The practice was not uncommon. In 1606 the bookseller Blount acquired the MS. of the long unpublished *A Discourse of Civill Life*, by Lodowick

The printer  
George Eld.

<sup>1</sup> Very few of his wares does Thorpe appear to have procured direct from the authors. It is true that between 1605 and 1611 there were issued under his auspices some eight volumes of genuinely literary value, including, besides Shakespeare's sonnets, three plays by Chapman (of which the text is very bad), four works of Ben Jonson (which his old friend Blount seems to have procured for him), and Coryat's *Odcombian Banquet*, a piratical excerpt from Coryat's *Crudities*. Blount acquired the copyright of Ben Jonson's *Sejanus* on November 2, 1604, and assigned it to Thorpe on August 6, 1605. Thorpe did not retain the property long. He transferred his right in *Sejanus*, as well as in Jonson's *Volpone*, to Walter Burre on October 3, 1610.

Bryskett, the friend of Spenser and Sidney. One-half of the edition bore the imprint, 'London for Edward Blount,' and the other half, 'London for W. Aspley.'<sup>1</sup>

Thorpe's printer, Eld, and his bookseller, Aspley, were in well-established positions in the trade. George Eld, who had taken up his freedom of the Stationers' Company on January 13, 1600, married in 1604 a widow who had already lost in rapid succession two husbands—both master-printers. The printing-press, with the office at the White Horse, in Fleet Lane, Old Bailey, which she inherited from her first husband Gabriel Simson (d. 1600), she had handed over next year to her second husband Richard Read (d. 1604). On Read's death in 1604, she straightway married Eld and her press passed to Eld. In 1607 and subsequent years Eld was very busy both as printer and publisher. Among seven copyrights which he acquired in 1607 was that of the play called *The Puritaine*, which he published with a title-page fraudulently assigning it to W. S.—initials which were clearly intended to suggest Shakespeare's name to the unwary.

William  
Aspley the  
bookseller.

Aspley, the most interesting of the three men engaged in producing Thorpe's venture, was the son of a clergyman of Royston, Cambridgeshire. After serving an apprenticeship with George Bishop, he was admitted a freeman on April 11, 1597. He never owned a press, but held in course of time the highest offices in the Company's gift, finally dying during the year of his mastership in 1640. His first shop was at the sign of the Tiger's Head in St. Paul's Churchyard, where Thorpe carried on business temporarily a few years later, but in 1603 he succeeded Felix Norton in the more important premises at the sign of the Parrot in the same locality. It was

<sup>1</sup> There are two copies in the British Museum with the two different imprints.

there that half of Thorpe's edition of Shakespeare's *Sonnets* was offered for sale in 1609. Aspley had already speculated in Shakespeare's work. He and a partner, Andrew Wise, acquired in 1600 copyrights of both the *Second Part of Henry IV* and *Much Ado about Nothing*, and published jointly quarto editions of the two. In the grant to Aspley and his friend of the licence for publication of these two plays, the titles of the books are followed by the words 'Wrytten by master Shakespere'. There is no earlier entry of the dramatist's name in the Stationers' Company Registers. In 1623 Aspley joined the syndicate which William Jaggard inaugurated for printing the First Folio edition of Shakespeare's plays, and he lived long enough to be a member of the new syndicate which was formed in 1632 to publish the Second Folio. Aspley had business relations with Thorpe, and with Thorpe's friend Blount, long before the issue of the *Sonnets*, and probably supplied Thorpe with capital.<sup>1</sup>

John Wright, the youngest of the associates in the enterprise of the *Sonnets*, had been admitted a freeman *per patrimonium* on June 28, 1602. His business was largely concerned with chap-books and ballads, but he was fortunate enough to acquire a few plays of interest. The most interesting publication in which he took part before the *Sonnets*, was the pre-Shakesperean play on the subject of *King Lear*, the copyright of which he took over from a printer (Simon Stafford) on May 8, 1605, on condition that he employed

John  
Wright,  
bookseller.

<sup>1</sup> On June 23, 1600, Thorpe and Aspley were granted jointly a provisional licence for the publication of 'A leter written to ye governors and assistantes of ye E[a]st Indian Merchantes in London Concerning the estat[e] of ye e[a]st Indian flete etc.' The licence was endorsed: 'This is to be their copy gettinge authority for [it].' The book was ultimately published by Thorpe, and was the earliest publication on the title-page of which his name figured. A similar provisional licence, granted to the two men on the same day, came to nothing, being afterwards cancelled owing to the official recognition of another publisher's claim to the copy concerned (cf. Arber's *Registers*, iii. 37).

Stafford to print it, which he did. In 1611 he published a new edition of Marlowe's *Faustus*, which came from Eld's press, and bore the same imprint as his impression of Shakespeare's sonnets. At a later period—on May 7, 1626—he joined the printer, John Haviland, in purchasing the copyright of Shakespeare's *Venus and Adonis*. His residence, described as 'at Christ Church Gate', was near Newgate. After 1612 he removed to the sign of 'the Bible without Newgate'.

The  
absence of  
Shake-  
speare's  
authority.

There are many signs, apart from the state of the text, which awaits our inquiry, that Shakespeare had no more direct concern in Thorpe's issue of his 154 sonnets in 1609, than in Jaggard's issue of his two sonnets, with the other miscellaneous contents of *The Passionate Pilgrim*, ten years before. The exceptionally brusque and commercial description of the poems, both in the entry of the licence in the Stationers' Company Register, and on the title-page, as 'Shakespeares Sonnets' (instead of 'Sonnets by William Shakespeare'), is good evidence that the author was no party to the transaction.<sup>1</sup> The testimony afforded by the dedication to 'Mr. W. H.', which Thorpe signed with his initials on the leaf following the title-page, is even more conclusive.<sup>2</sup> Only when the stationer owned the copyright and controlled the publication, did he choose the patron and sign the dedication. Francis Newman, the stationer who printed 'dispersed transcripts' of Sir Philip Sidney's sonnets for the first time in 1591, exercised the customary privilege. Thorpe had already done so himself when issuing Marlowe's *Lucan* in 1600.

<sup>1</sup> The nearest parallel is in the title of *Brittons Bowre of Delights* (1591), a poetic miscellany piratically assigned to the poet Nicholas Breton by the publisher Richard Jones. See *Passionate Pilgrim*, Introduction, p. 16.

<sup>2</sup> Initials, instead of full names, were commonly employed when the dedicatee was a private and undistinguished friend of the dedicator.



There is no ground for the common assumption that 'T. T.' in addressing the dedication of Shakespeare's sonnets to 'Mr. W. H.', was transgressing the ordinary law affecting publishers' dedications, and was covertly identifying the 'lovely' youth whom Shakespeare had eulogized in his sonnets. A study of Elizabethan and Jacobean bibliography can alone interpret the situation aright. In all probability Thorpe in the dedication of the *Sonnets* followed the analogy of his dedication of Marlowe's *Lucan* in 1600. There he selected for patron Blount, his friend-in-trade, who had aided him in the publication. His chosen patron of the edition of Shakespeare's *Sonnets* in 1609 was doubtless one who stood to him in a similar business relation.

The dedica-  
tion to  
Mr. W. H.

Although Thorpe's buoyant and self-complacent personality slightly coloured his style, his dedicatory address to 'Mr. W. H.' followed, with slight variations, the best recognized and most conventional of the dedicatory formulae of the day. He framed his salutation of 'Mr. W. H.' into a wish for his patron's 'all happiness' and 'eternity'.<sup>1</sup> 'All

<sup>1</sup> The formula was of great antiquity. Dante employed it in the dedication of his *Divina Commedia*, which ran: 'Domino Kani Grandi de Scala devotissimus suus Dante Aligherius . . . vitam optat per tempora diuturna felicem, et gloriosi nominis in perpetuum incrementum.' The Elizabethan dedicatory commonly 'wisheth' his patron 'all happiness' and 'eternity' (or periphrases to that effect) by way of prelude or heading to a succeeding dedicatory epistle, but numerous examples could be adduced where the dedicatory, as in Thorpe's case, left the 'wish' to stand alone, and where no epistle followed it. Thorpe's dedicatory procedure and choice of type was obviously influenced by Ben Jonson's form of dedication before the first edition of his *Volpone*, which Thorpe published for Jonson in 1607 and which Eld printed. On the first leaf, following the title, appears in short lines (in the same fount of large capitals as that used in Thorpe's dedication to 'Mr. W. H.')

these words: 'To the Most Noble | and Most Aequall | Sisters | The Two Famous  
Universities | For their Love | And | Acceptance | Shewn | To his Poeme | in  
the Presentation | Ben: Jonson | The Gratefull Acknowledger | Dedicates |  
Both It and Himselfe |.'

In very small type, at the right-hand corner of the

*happiness*', 'health and *eternall happinesse*', 'all perseverance with soules *happiness*', 'health on earth temporall and higher *happiness eternall*', 'the *prosperity* of times successe in this life, with the reward of *eternitie* in the world to come' are variants of the common form, drawn from books that were produced at almost the same moment as Shakespeare's sonnets. The substantives are invariably governed by the identical inflexion of the verb—'wisheth'—which Thorpe employed.

The promise  
of eternity.

By attaching to the conventional complimentary mention of 'eternity' the ornamental phrase 'promised by our ever-living poet' (i.e. Shakespeare), Thorpe momentarily indulged in that vein of grandiloquence of which other dedications from his pen furnish examples. 'Promises' of eternity were showered by poets on their patrons with prodigal hands. Shakespeare in his sonnets had repeated the current convention with much fervour when addressing a fair youth. Thorpe's interweaving of the conventional 'wish' of the ordinary bookmaker, with an allusion to the conventional 'promise' of the panegyricizing poet, gave fresh zest and emphasis to the well-worn phrases of complimentary courtesy. There is no implication in Thorpe's dedicatory greeting of an ellipse, after the word 'promised', of the word 'him', i.e. 'Mr. W. H.' Thorpe 'wisheth' 'Mr. W. H.' 'eternity', no less grudgingly than 'our ever-living poet' offered his own friend the 'promise' of it in his sonnets.

Thorpe's  
technical  
language.

Almost every phrase in his dedicatory greeting of 'Mr. W. H.' has a technical significance, which has no bearing on Shakespeare's intention as sonneteer, but exclusively concerns Thorpe's action and position as the publisher. In accordance with professional custom, Thorpe dubbed himself

page, below this dedication, are the words: 'There follows an *Epistle* if | you dare venture on | the length.' The *Epistle* begins overleaf.

‘the well-wishing adventurer in setting forth’, and thereby claimed sole and exclusive responsibility for the undertaking. His fellow-publisher, William Barley, called himself his patron’s ‘faithful *well-willer*’ when, in 1595, he dedicated a book, the manuscript of which he had picked up without communication with the author, to Richard Stapar, a Turkey merchant of his acquaintance.<sup>1</sup> Similarly, when the dramatist John Marston in 1606 undertook to issue for himself his play named ‘Parasitaster or the Fawne’, he pointed out in a prose preface that he (the author) was the sole controller of the publication, and was on this occasion his own ‘setter out’: ‘Let it therefore stand with good excuse that I have been my own *setter out*.’

To the title which Thorpe bestows on Mr. W. H., ‘the onlie begetter of these insuing sonnets,’ a like professional significance attaches. In this phrase Thorpe acknowledges the services of ‘Mr. W. H.’ in ‘procuring’ and collecting in his behalf the ‘private’ transcripts, from which the volume was printed. To ‘Mr. W. H.’s’ sole exertions the birth of the publication may be attributed. ‘Mr. W. H.’ filled a part which is familiarly known in the history of Elizabethan publishing as ‘procurer of the copy’. In Elizabethan English there was no irregularity in the use of ‘begetter’ in its primary sense of ‘getter’ or ‘procurer’, without any implica-

‘The onlie  
begetter.’

<sup>1</sup> Barley saluted his patron (before Richard Hasleton’s report of his ‘Ten years’ Travels in foreign countries’) thus: ‘Your worship’s faithful well-willer, W[illiam] Barley, wisheth all fortunate and happy success in all your enterprises, with increase of worldly worship; and, after death, the joys unspeakable.’ A rare copy of the tract is at Britwell. It is reprinted in Arber’s *Garner*. The stationer Thomas Walkley in 1622, in his preface to the Second Quarto of Beaumont and Fletcher’s *Philaster*, wrote that ‘he had *adventured* to issue a revised edition knowing how many *well-wishers* it had abroad’. Another ‘stationer’, Richard Hawkins, who published on his own account the third edition of the same play in 1628, described himself in the preliminary page as ‘acting the *merchant adventurer*’s part’.

tion of that common secondary meaning of 'breed' or 'generate', which in modern speech has altogether displaced the earlier signification.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 'Beget' came into being as an intensive form of 'get', and was mainly employed in Anglo-Saxon and Mediaeval English in the sense of 'obtain'. It acquired the specialized signification of 'breed' at a slightly later stage of development, and until the end of the seventeenth century it bore concurrently the alternative meanings of 'procure' (or 'obtain') and 'breed' (or 'produce'). Seventeenth-century literature and lexicography recognized these two senses of the word and no other. 'Begetter' might mean 'father' (or 'author') or it might mean 'procurer' (or 'acquirer'). There is no suggestion that Thorpe meant that Mr. W. H. was 'author' of the sonnets. Consequently doubt that he meant 'procurer' or 'acquirer' is barely justifiable. The following are six examples of the Elizabethan use of the word in its primary significance of 'procure':—

(1) The mightier [sc. the] man, the mightier is the thing  
That makes him honour'd, or *begets* [i.e. procures] him hate.  
(*Lucrece*, 1004-5.)

(2) We could at once put us in readiness,  
And take a lodging fit to entertain  
Such friends as Time in Padua shall *beget* [i.e. procure].  
(*Taming of the Shrew*, i. 1. 43-5.)

(3) 'In the very torrent, tempest, and, as I may say, the whirlwind of passion . . . acquire and *beget* a temperance.' (*Hamlet*, iii. 2. 6.) Hamlet in this sentence colloquially seeks emphasis by repetition, and the distinction of meaning to be drawn between 'acquire' and 'beget' is no more than that to be drawn between the preceding 'torrent' and 'tempest.'

(4) 'I have some cousins german at Court [that] shall *beget* you (i.e. procure for you) the reversion of the Master of the King's Revels.' (Dekker's *Satirornastix*, 1652; cf. Hawkins' *Origin of English Drama*, iii. 156.)

(5) '[This play] hath *begot itself* (i.e. procured for itself or obtained) a greater favour than he (i.e. *Sejanus*) lost, the love of good men.' (Ben Jonson's dedication before *Sejanus*, 1605, which was published by Thorpe.)

(6) '[A spectator wishes to see a hero on the stage] 'kill Paynims, wild boars, dun cows, and other monsters; *beget* him (i.e. get him) a reputation, and marry an Emperor's daughter for his mistress'. (Ben Jonson's *Magnetic Lady* (1632), Act i, Epilogue.)

It should be borne in mind that in the Variorum edition of 1821 James Boswell the younger, who there incorporated Malone's unpublished collections, appended to T. T.'s dedication the note: 'The word *begetter* is merely the person who *gets* or *procures* a thing, with the common prefix *be* added to it.' After quoting Dekker's use of the word as above (No. 4), Boswell adds that W. H. probably 'furnished the printer with his copy'. Neither Steevens nor Malone, who were singularly well versed in Elizabethan bibliography,

A very few years earlier a cognomen almost identical with 'begetter' (in the sense of procurer) was conferred in a popular anthology, entitled *Belvedere or the Garden of the Muses*, on one who rendered its publisher the like service that Mr. W. H. seems to have rendered Thorpe, the publisher of Shakespeare's *Sonnets*. One John Bodenham, filling much the same rôle as that assigned to Mr. W. H., brought together in 1600 a number of brief extracts ransacked from the unpublished, as well as from the published, writings of contemporary poets. Bodenham's collections fell into the hands of an enterprising 'stationer', one Hugh Astley, who published them under the title *Belvedere or The Garden of the Muses*. After an unsigned address from the publisher 'To the Reader' in explanation of the undertaking, there follows immediately a dedicatory sonnet inscribed to John Bodenham, who had brought the material for the volume together, and had committed it to the publisher's charge. The lines are signed in the publisher's behalf, by A. M. (probably the well-known writer, Anthony Munday). Bodenham was there apostrophized as

'First  
causer and  
collectour  
of these  
floures.'

First causer and collectour of these floures.

In another address to the reader at the end of the book, which is headed 'The Conclusion', the publisher again refers more prosaically to Bodenham, as 'The Gentleman who

recognized that 'begetter' could be interpreted as 'inspirer'—an interpretation of which no example has been adduced. Daniel used the word 'begotten', in the common sense of 'produced', in the dedicatory Sonnet to the Countess of Pembroke, before his collection of sonnets called *Delia* (1592). He bids his patroness regard his poems as her own, as 'begotten by thy hand and my desire'; she is asked to treat them as if they were literally *produced* by, or born of, her hand or pen, at the writer's request. The countess was herself a writer of poetry, a circumstance which gives point to Daniel's compliment. The passage is deprived of sense if 'begotten by thy hand' be accorded any other meaning.

was *the cause* of this Collection' (p. 235). When Thorpe called 'Mr. W. H.' 'the onlie begetter of these insuing sonnets', he probably meant no more than the organizers of the publication of the book called *Belvedere*, in 1600, meant when they conferred the appellations 'first causer' and 'the cause' on John Bodenham, who was procurer for them of the copy for that enterprise.<sup>1</sup>

## IV

State of the  
text.

THE corrupt state of the text of Thorpe's edition of 1609 fully confirms the conclusion that the enterprise lacked authority, and was pursued throughout in that reckless spirit which infected publishing speculations of the day. The character of the numerous misreadings leaves little doubt that Thorpe had no means of access to the author's MS. The procurer of the 'copy' had obviously brought together 'dispersed transcripts' of varying accuracy. Many had accumulated incoherences in their progress from pen to pen.<sup>2</sup> The 'copy' was constructed out of the papers circulating in private, and often gave only a hazy indication of the poet's

<sup>1</sup> What was the name of which W. H. were the initials cannot be stated positively. I have given reasons for believing them to belong to one William Hall, a freeman of the Stationers' Company, who seems to have dealt in unpublished poems or 'dispersed transcripts' in the early years of the seventeenth century and to have procured their publication; cf. *Life of Shakespeare*, p. 418 seq.

<sup>2</sup> Like Sidney's sonnets, which long circulated in 'private' MSS., Shakespeare's collection 'being spread abroad in written copies, had gathered much corruption by ill writers (i.e. scribes)'. Cf. the publisher Thomas Newman's dedicatory epistle before the first (unauthorized) edition of Sidney's *Astrophel and Stella* (1591). Thorpe's bookselling friend, Edward Blount, when he gathered together, without the author's aid, the scattered essays by John Earle, which Blount published in 1628 under the title of *Micro-cosmographie*, described them as 'many sundry dispersed transcripts, some very imperfect and surreptitious'.

meaning. The compiler had arranged the poems roughly in order of subject. The printer followed the manuscript with ignorant fidelity. Signs of inefficient correction of the press abound, and suggest haste in composition and press-work. The book is a comparatively short one, consisting of forty leaves and 2,156 lines of verse. Yet there are probably on an average five defects per page or one in every ten lines.

Of the following thirty-eight misprints, at least thirty Misprints. play havoc with the sense:—

- XII. 4. And sable curls *or* siluer'd ore with white:  
(for *all*).
- XXIII. 14. To heare *wit* cies belongs to loues fine *wibt*:  
(for *with* and *wit*).
- XXVI. 11. And puts apparrell on my *tottered* louing: (for  
*tattered*).
- XXVIII. 14. And night doth nightly make greefes *length*  
seeme stronger: (for *strength*).
- XXXIX. 12. Which time and thoughts so sweetly *dost*  
deceiue: (for *doth*).
- XL. 7. But yet be blam'd, if thou *this* selfe deceauest:  
(for *thy*).
- XLIV. 13. Receiuing naughts by elements so sloe.
- XLVII. 11. For thou *nor* farther then my thoughts canst  
moue: (for *not* or *no*).
- LI. 10. Therefore desire (of perfects love being  
made).
- LIV. 14. When that shall vade, *by* verse distils your  
truth: (for *my*).
- LVI. 13. *As* cal it Winter, which being ful of care:  
(for *or*).
- LXIII. 2. With times iniurious hand *chrusht* and ore-  
worne: (for *crush'd*).

Misprints.

- LXV. 12. Or who his spoile *or* beautie can forbid  
(for *of*).
- LXIX. 3. All touns (the voice of soules) giue thee that  
*end*: (for *due*).
- LXXIII. 4. Bare *m'nd* quiers, where late the sweet birds  
sang: (for *ruin'd*).
- LXXVI. 7. That euery word doth almost *fel* my name:  
(for *tell*).
- LXXVII. 10. Commit to these waste *blackes*, and thou shalt  
finde: (for *blanks*).
- LXXXVIII. 1. When thou shalt be *dispode* to set me light:  
(for *disposed*).
- XC. 11. But in the onset come, so *stall* I taste: (for  
*shall*).
- XCI. 9. Thy loue is bitter then high birth to me:  
(for *better*).
- XCIV. 4. Vnmooued, *could*, and to temptation slow:  
(for *cold*).
- XCVI. 11. How many gazers *mighst* thou lead away:  
(for *mightest*).
- XCIX. 9. *Our* blushing shame, an other white dispaire:  
(for *One*).
- CII. 7-8. As Philomell in summers front doth singe,  
And stops *his* pipe in growth of riper daies:  
(for *her*).
- CVI. 12. They had not *still* enough your worth to  
sing: (for *skill*).
- CVIII. 3. What's new to speake, what *now* to register:  
(for *new*).
- CXII. 14. That all the world besides *me thinkes y'are*  
*dead*: (for *methinks are dead*).
- CXIII. 6. Of bird, of flowre, or shape which it doth  
*lack*: (for *latch*).



- CXXVII. 9. Therefore my *Mistersse* eyes are Rauen blacke : Misprints.  
(for *Mistress's brows*).
- CXXIX. 9. *Made In* pursut and in possession so : (for  
*mad in pursuit*).
- 10-11. Had, hauing, and in quest, to haue extreame  
A blisse in prooffe and *proud and* very wo :  
(for *prov'd a*).
- CXXXII. 2. Knowing thy heart *torment* me with disdaine :  
(for *torments*).
9. As those two *morning* eyes become thy face :  
(for *mourning*).
- CXL. 13. That I may not be so, nor thou *be lyde* : (for  
*belied*).
- CXLIV. 2. Which like two spirits do *sugiest* me still :  
(for *suggest*).
6. Tempteth my better angel from my *sight* : (for  
*side*).
- CLII. 13. For I haue sworne thee faire : more periurde  
*eye* : (for *I*).
- CLIII. 14. Where Cupid got new fire ; my mistres *eye* :  
(for *eyes* rhyming with *lies*).

The discrepancies in spelling may not exceed ordinary limits, but they confirm the impression that the compositors followed an unintelligent transcript. 'Scythe' appears as 'sieth' (XII. 13 and C. 14), and as 'syeth' (CXXIII. 14); 'Minutes' appears as 'mynuits' (XIV. 5 and LXXVII. 2), as 'mynuit' (CXXVI. 8), and as 'minuites' (LX. 2); 'False' appears as 'false' (XX. 4, 5), as 'faulse' (LXVIII. 14), and as 'falce' (LXXII. 9, XCII. 14, XCIII. 7). More than forty other orthographical peculiarities of like significance, few of which are distinguishable from misprints, are:—'accumilate' for 'accumulate' (CXVII. 10); 'a floate' for 'afoate'

Confusion  
in spelling.

(LXXX. 9); 'alaied' for 'allayed' (LVI. 3); 'are' (in 'thou are') for 'art' (LXX. 1); 'Asconce' for 'Askance' (CX. 6); 'Alcumie' for 'alchemy' (CXIV. 4); 'bale' for 'bail' (CXXXIII. 10); 'beare' for 'bier' (XII. 8); 'binne' for 'been' (CXVII. 5); 'boure' for 'bower' (CXXVII. 7); 'coopelment' for 'couplement' (XXI. 5); 'Croe' for 'crow' (CXIII. 12); 'cryttick' for 'critic' (CXII. 11); 'culler' for 'colour' (XCIX. 14); 'Currall' for 'Coral' (CXXX. 2); 'deceaued' for 'deceived' (CIV. 12); 'denide' for 'denied' (CXLII. 14); 'dome' for 'doom' (CXLV. 7); 'Eaues' for 'Eves', i.e. 'Eve's' (XCIII. 13); 'ethers' for 'eithers', i.e. 'either's' (XXVIII. 5); 'fild' for 'filled' (LXIII. 3 and LXXXVI. 13); 'foles' for 'fools' (CXXXIV. 13); 'grin'de' for 'grind' (CX. 10); 'grose' for 'gross' (CLI. 6); 'highth' for 'height' (CXVI. 8); 'Himne' for 'hymn' (LXXXV. 7); 'hower' for 'hour' (CXXVI. 2); 'hunny' for 'honey' (LXV. 5); 'I' for 'Ay' (CXXXVI. 6); 'iealous' for 'jealous' (LVII. 9); 'inhearce' for 'inhearse' (LXXXVI. 3); 'marierom' for 'marjoram' (XCIX. 7); 'naigh' for 'neigh' (LI. 11); 'nere' for 'ne'er', i.e. 'never' (CXVIII. 5); 'of' for 'off' (LXI. 14); 'pertake' for 'partake' (CXLIX. 2); 'pibled' for 'pebbled' (LX. 1); 'pray' for 'prey' (LXXIV. 10); 'randon' for 'random' (CXLVII. 12); 'renu'de' for 'renewed' (CXI. 8); 'sawsie' for 'saucy' (LXXX. 7); 'shall' for 'shalt' (LXXXVIII. 8); 'thether' for 'thither' (CLIII. 12); 'vnstayined' for 'unstained' (LXX. 8); 'woes' for 'woos' (XLI. 7); 'yawes' for 'jaws' (XIX. 3); 'y'haue' for 'you have' (CXX. 6); 'Yf' for 'If' (CXXIV. 1).

'Their' for  
'thy'.

The substitution, fifteen times, of *their* for *thy* or *thine*, and once of *there* for *thee*, even more forcibly illustrates the want of intelligent apprehension of the subject-matter of the

poems on the part of those who saw the volume through the press. Few works are more dependent for their due comprehension on the correct reproduction of the possessive pronouns, and the frequent recurrence of this form of error is very damaging to the reputation of the text.

The following is a list of these puzzling confusions :—

- xxvi. 12. To show me worthy of *their* sweet respect :  
(for *thy*).
- xxvii. 10. Presents *their* shaddoe to my sightles view :  
(for *thy*).
- xxx1. 8. But things remou'd that hidden in *there* lie :  
(for *thee*).
- xxxv. 8. Excusing *their* sins more then *their* sins are :  
(for *thy* and *thy*).
- xxxvii. 7. Intitled in *their* parts, do crowned sit : (for  
*thy*).
- xlIII. 11. When in dead night *their* faire imperfect  
shade : (for *thy*).
- xlV. 12. Of *their* faire health, recounting it to me :  
(for *thy*).
- xlvi. 3. Mine eye, my heart *their* pictures sight would  
barre : (for *thy*).
8. And sayes in him *their* faire appearance lyes :  
(for *thy*).
13. As thus, mine eyes due is *their* outward part :  
(for *thine*).
14. And my hearts right, *their* inward loue of  
heart : (for *thine*).
- lxix. 5. *Their* outward thus with outward praise is  
crownd : (for *Thy*).
- lxx. 6. *Their* worth the greater beeing woo'd of  
time : (for *Thy*).

CXXVIII. 11. Ore whome *their* fingers walke with gentle gate: (for *thy*).

14. Giue them *their* fingers, me thy lips to kisse: (for *thy*).

‘To’ for  
‘too’.

The like want of care, although of smaller moment, is apparent in the frequent substitution of the preposition *to* for the adverbial *too* :—

XXXVIII. 3. Thine owne sweet argument, *to* excellent.

LXI. 14. From me farre of, with others all *to* neere.

LXXIV. 12. *To* base of thee to be remembred.

LXXXIII. 7. How farre a moderne quill doth come *to* short.

LXXXVI. 2. Bound for the prize of (all *to* precious) you.

The reverse mistake appears in—

CXXXV. 2. And Will *too* boote: (for *to* boot).

‘Were’ and  
‘wear’.

At least thrice *were* is confused with *wear* :—

LXXVII. 1. Thy glasse will shew thee how thy beauties *were*: (for *wear*).

XCIII. 11. They *weare* but sweet, but figures of delight: (for *were*).

CXL. 5. If I might teach thee witte better it *weare*: (for *were*).

Miscellaneous errors.

The following proofs of carelessness admit of no classification, but give additional proof of the want of discrimination on the part of those who have credited the volume with exceptional typographical accuracy.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> There are some trifling discrepancies between various copies of the edition which illustrate the common practice among Elizabethan printers of binding up an uncorrected sheet, after the sheet has been corrected, and after other copies have been made up with the corrected version. The ‘Ellesmere’ copy has, in LXXVIII. 6, the unique misreading—*flee* (for *flie*)—which is corrected in other copies. As in the British Museum copy, it has, too, at F3 (recto) the wrong catchword *The* for *Speake*, which is set right in the Bodleian copy.

There was an obvious error in the 'copy' of the first two lines of *Sonnet CXLVI*. 1, 2 :—

Poore soule the center of *my sinfull earth*,  
*My sinfull earth* these rebbell powres that thee array.

The repetition of the three last words of line 1 at the beginning of line 2 makes the sense and metre hopeless.

*Sonnet CXVI* is wrongly headed 119.

The first word of *Sonnet CXXII*, *Thy*, appears as *TThy*. The initial 'W' of *Sonnet LXXIX* is from a wrong fount. The catchwords are given more correctly in some copies than in others, but nine errors are found in all. At C<sub>3</sub> (recto) *To* appears instead of *Thou*; at C<sub>4</sub> (verso) *Eternall* for *Eternal*; at E (recto) *Crawls* for *Crawles*; at D<sub>2</sub> (recto), E<sub>3</sub> (recto), F (verso), G<sub>2</sub> (verso), H<sub>3</sub> (verso), and I<sub>2</sub> (recto), *Mine*, *That*, *I grant*, *When*, *My*, and *Loue* appear instead of the numerals 46, 70, 82, 106, 130, and 142, which are the headings respectively of the next pages (the numeral is given correctly in like circumstances in seven other places).

The appearance of two pairs of brackets, one above the other, enclosing blank spaces, at the end of *Sonnet CXXVI* is a curious irregularity, due probably for once to the printer's scruples, albeit mistaken. The poem is not a regular sonnet : it consists of six riming couplets—twelve lines in all. But it is complete in itself, and it is not uncommon to find poems of the same kind and length inserted in sonnet-sequences of the day. The printer, however, imagined that it was a sonnet with the thirteenth and fourteenth lines missing, and for these he clumsily left a vacant space which he vaguely expected to fill in subsequently.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The suggestion that the printer intended the empty brackets to denote the close of the first section of the sonnets, most of which were addressed to a man, and the opening of a second section, most of which were addressed

Irregularities of punctuation.

Punctuation shows, on the whole, no more systematic care than other features of composition. Commas are frequent, both in and out of place. At times they stand for a full stop. At times they are puzzlingly replaced by a colon or semicolon, or again they are omitted altogether. Brackets are occasionally used as a substitute for commas, but not regularly enough to justify a belief that they were introduced on a systematic plan.<sup>1</sup>

Capitals and italics.

Considerable irregularity characterizes the use of capital letters within the line or of italic type. Both appear rarely and at the compositor's whim. It was the natural tendency to italicize unfamiliar or foreign words and names and to give them an initial capital in addition. But the printer of the sonnets usually went his own way without heed of law or custom.<sup>2</sup>

to a woman, is unsupported by authority or by the precise position of the brackets. They are directly attached to the single sonnet (CXXVI), and point to some imagined hiatus within its limits.

<sup>1</sup> Brackets, in the absence of commas, are helpful in such lines as these:

Whilst I (my souveraine) watch the clock for you	LVII. 6.
Oh let me suffer (being at your beck)	LVIII. 5.
O if (I say) you looke vpon this verse	LXXI. 9.
When I (perhaps) compounded am with clay	10.
Or (being wrackt) I am a worthlesse bote	LXXX. 11.

Brackets are wrongly introduced in lines like:—

But since your worth (wide as the Ocean is)	LXXX. 5.
Bound for the prize of (all to precious) you,	LXXXVI. 2.

The absence of all punctuation within the line in such lines as these is very perplexing:—

Which vsed liues th' executor to be.	IV. 14.
Sings this to thee thou single wilt proue none.	VIII. 14.

In several places a mark of interrogation takes the place of one of exclamation with most awkward effect.

<sup>2</sup> 'Rose' is used twelve times: it is italicized once (I. 2); the names of other flowers are not italicized at all (cf. XXV. 6, XCIV. 14, XCVIII. 9, XCIX. 6). 'Alchemy' (alchimie) is used twice: it is once italicized (CXIV. 4) and once not (XXXIII. 4). 'Audite' is used thrice, and is twice italicized. 'Autumn' appears twice, and is once italicized: 'spring', 'summer', and 'winter' are never thus distinguished. The following are the other italicized words in the sonnets: *Abisme* (CXII. 9); *Adonis* (LIII. 5); *Alien* (LXXVIII. 3);

To Thorpe's 'copy' of the sonnets was appended a poem which had no concern with them. It consisted of 329 lines in the seven-line stanza of *Lucrece*, and was entitled '*A Lovers Complaint*. By William Shake-speare.' The piece is a poetic lament by a maiden for her betrayal by a deceitful lover. The title constantly recurs in Elizabethan poetry.<sup>1</sup> The tone throughout is conventional. The language is strained, and the far-fetched imagery exaggerates the worst defects of Shakespeare's *Lucrece*. Such metaphors as the following are frequent:—

Sometimes her leuell'd eyes their carriage ride,  
As they did battery to the spheres intend. (ll. 22-3.)

This said, his watery eyes he did dismount,  
Whose sights till then were leuell'd on my face. (ll. 281-2.)

A very large number of words which are employed in the poem are found nowhere else in Shakespeare's work. Some of these seem invented for the occasion to cover incapacity of expression.<sup>2</sup> The attribution of the poem to Shakespeare may

*Cupid* (CLIII. 1 and 14); *Dyans* (CLIII. 2); *Eaues* (XCIII. 13); *Grecian* (LIII. 8); *Hellens* (LIII. 7); *Heriticke* (CXXIV. 9); *Hews* (XX. 7); *Informer* (CXXV. 13); *Intrim* (LVI. 9); *Mars* (LV. 7); *Philomell* (CII. 7); *Quietus* (CXXVI. 12); *Satire* (C. 11); *Saturne* (XCVIII. 4); *Statues* (LV. 5); *Syren* (CXIX. 1); *Will* (CXXXV. 1, 2, 11, 12, 14; CXXXVI. 2, 5, 14; CXLIII. 13). In *A Lover's Complaint* only a single word throughout is italicized—*Alloes*, in l. 273. The following words of like class to those italicized in the sonnets lack that mark of distinction: *Orient* (VII. 1); *Phænix* (XIX. 4); *Muse* (XXXII. 10 et al. loc.); *Ocean* (LXIV. 5); *Epitaph* (LXXXI. 1); *Rhethorick* (LXXXII. 10); *Charter* (LXXXVII. 3); *cryttick* (CXII. 11); *cherubines* (CXIV. 6); *Phisitions* (CXL. 8).

<sup>1</sup> Two poems called '*A Lovers Complaint*' figure in Breton's *Arbor of Amorous Devises* (1597).

<sup>2</sup> The following are some of the once-used words in *A Lover's Complaint*: 'Acture' (l. 185); 'annexions' (208); 'bat' [i.e. stick] (64); 'credent' (279); 'encrimson'd' (201); 'ender' (222); 'enpatron' (224); 'enswathed' (49); 'extincture' (294); 'fluxive' (50); 'impleach'd' (205); 'inundation' (290); 'invised' (212); 'laundering' (17); 'lover'd' (320); 'maund' (36); 'pensived' (219); 'phraseless' (225); 'plenitude' (302); 'sawn' [= seen] (91); 'sheaved' hat (31); 'termless' (94).

well be disputed. It was probably a literary exercise on a very common theme by some second-rate poet, which was circulating like the sonnets in written copies, and was assigned to Shakespeare by an enterprising transcriber. The reference to—

Deep-brained sonnets, that did amplify  
Each stone's dear nature, worth, and quality,  
(ll. 209-10.)

combines with the far-fetched conceits to suggest that the writer drew much of his inspiration from that vast sonnet literature, which both in France and England abounded in affected allusions to precious gems.<sup>1</sup> The typography of the poem has much the same defects as the sonnets. Among the confusing misprints are the following:—‘a sacred *Sunne*’ for ‘nun’ (260); ‘*Or* cleft effect’ for ‘O’ (293); ‘all *straing* formes’ for ‘strange’ (303); ‘*sounding* palenesse’ for ‘swounding’ or ‘swooning’ (305); ‘*sound*’ for ‘swound’ or ‘swoon’ (308).

<sup>1</sup> Ronsard, and all the poets of the Pléiade, were very generous in their comparison of their mistress’ charms to precious stones. The practice, which was freely imitated by Elizabethan sonneteers, received its most conspicuous illustration in the work of Remy Belleau, in his *Les Amours et nouveaux échanges des pierres precieuses, vertus et proprietes d’icelles*, which was first published at Paris in 1576, and figuratively describes, with amorous application, the amethyst, the diamond, the loadstone, the ruby, onyx, opal, emerald, turquoise, and many other precious stones. Shakespeare proves his acquaintance with poems of the kind, when he refers in his sonnets to the sonneteers’ habit of

Making a couplement of proud compare,  
With sun and moon, with earth and sea’s *rich gems*.  
(*Sonnet* XXI.)

In *Sonnet* CXXX he again derides the common convention :—

My mistress’ eyes are nothing like the sun;  
*Coral* is far more red than her lips’ red.



## V

THORPE'S edition of the *Sonnets* does not seem to have been received by the public with enthusiasm. Edward Alleyn, the actor, purchased a copy of the book for fivepence, in June, 1609, within a month of its publication.<sup>1</sup> Another copy, in the John Rylands Library (No. VI, below), was clearly purchased at the same price for a gift-book, near the same date. Yet a third extant copy (No. VII, below) bears indication that it was acquired in very early days by Milton's patron, the Earl of Bridgewater. But there is no sign that Shakespeare's sonnets were widely read. A single edition answered the demand. The copyright proved of no marketable value. Thorpe retained it till he disappeared in 1625, and then no one was found to take it off his hands.

Reception of  
Thorpe's  
volume.

Contemporary references to Shakespeare's sonnets in the printed literature of the day are rare. The poet, Drummond of Hawthornden, seems to have studied them, though he failed to note the purchase of Thorpe's volume in the list which he prepared of the English books bought by him up to the year 1614. Many reminiscences of Shakespeare's sonnets figure in Drummond's early sonnets and poems, which were first collected in 1616. He borrowed, too, some lines from *A Lover's Complaint*, which was appended to Thorpe's edition of the *Sonnets*.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Warner's *Dulwich Manuscripts*, p. 92.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Drummond's *Poems*, pt. ii, Sonnet xi, 2nd impression, Edinb. 1616 :

deare *Napkin* doe not grieve  
That I this Tribute pay thee from mine *Eine*,  
And that (these posting Houres I am to live)  
*I laundre thy faire Figures in this Brine.*

*A Lover's Complaint* (15-18):

Oft did she heave her *Napkin* to her *eyne*,  
Which on it had conceited characters,  
*Laundring the silken figures in the brine*  
That season'd woe had pelleted in teares.

Some twenty years later, Shakespeare's earnest admirer and imitator, Sir John Suckling, literally reproduced many expressions from Shakespeare's sonnets, in his *Tragedy of Brennoralt*.<sup>1</sup>

Continued  
circulation  
of the  
sonnets in  
manuscript.

There seems little doubt that Shakespeare's sonnets continued to circulate in manuscript as separate poems, with distinct headings, after, no less than before, Thorpe's publication of the collection. Many copies of detached sonnets appear in extant manuscript albums, or in commonplace books of the early years of the seventeenth century. The textual variations from Thorpe's edition indicate that these transcripts were derived from a version still circulating in manuscript, which was distinct from that which Thorpe procured. In a manuscript commonplace book in the British Museum, which was apparently begun about the year 1610, there is a copy of *Sonnet VIII*<sup>2</sup>, with the heading not found anywhere else: 'In laudem

The eighth  
sonnet in  
manuscript.

<sup>1</sup> Shakespeare's *Sonnet XLVII* :—

    Betwixt mine eye and heart a league is tooke,  
    And each doth good turnes now vnto the other,  
    *When that mine eye is famisht for a looke,*  
    Or heart in love with sighes himselfe doth smother;  
    With my loues picture then my eye doth feast,  
    *And to the painted banquet bids my heart.*

clearly suggested such a passage in Suckling's play (v. 18–22) (cf. *Fragmenta Aurea*, 1646, p. 44), as :—

*Ipk[igene]*. Will you not send me neither,  
    Your picture when y' are gone?  
    *That when my eye is famisht for a looke,*  
    It may have where to feed,  
    *And to the painted Feast invite my heart.*

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Add. MS. 15,226, f. 4 b. This volume contains many different handwritings belonging to various periods of the seventeenth century. It opens with a poem which does not seem to have been printed, entitled *Rawleighs Caueat to Secure Courtiers*, beginning, 'I speak to such if anie such there be.' Towards the end of the volume is a copy of a tract on the Plague of London of 1665, and, in a far earlier hand, copies of Heywood's translation of the two Epistles of Ovid, which appear in *The Passionate Pilgrim* of 1612.

musice et opprobrium contemptorij (*sic*) eiusdem.' There is no sign that the poem was recognized as forming part of any long sequence of sonnets. The variant readings are not important, but they are numerous enough, combined with differences in spelling, punctuation, and the use of capital letters, to prove that the copyist did not depend on Thorpe's text. In the manuscript the two quatrains and the concluding sixain are numbered '1', '2', and '3' respectively. The last six lines appear in the manuscript thus:—

3.

Marke howe one stringe, sweet husband to another  
Strikes each on each, by mutuall orderinge  
Resemblinge *Childe, and Syer*, and happy Mother  
w.<sup>ch</sup> all in one, *this single note* dothe singe  
whose speechles songe beeing many seeming one  
*Sings this to thee, Thou single, shalt proue none.*

W: Shakspeare

In Thorpe's edition these lines run thus:—

Marke how one string sweet husband to an other,  
Strikes each in each by mutuall ordering;  
Resembling *sier, and child*, and happy mother,  
Who all in one, *one pleasing note* do sing:  
Whose speechlesse song being many, seeming one,  
*Sings this to thee thou single wilt proue none.*

The superior punctuation of the last line of the manuscript is noticeable.

In like manner, *Sonnets* LXXI and XXXII, which, closely connected in subject, meditate on the likelihood that the poet will die before his friend, appear as independent poems in a manuscript commonplace book of poetry apparently kept by an Oxford student about 1633.<sup>1</sup>

*Sonnets*  
LXXI and  
XXXII.

<sup>1</sup> This MS., formerly belonging to Mr. J. O. Halliwell-Phillipps, is now in the library of Mr. Marsden J. Perry, of Providence, U.S.A. Mr. Winship,

The edition  
of 1640.

No less than thirty-one years elapsed before a second publisher repeated Thorpe's experiment. In 1640, John Benson, a publisher of St. Dunstan's Churchyard, Fleet Street, where Jaggard's memory still lingered, brought out a volume called 'Poems written by Wil. Shakespeare Gent.' It is a miscellaneous collection of verse by several hands,

of Providence, has kindly sent me a transcript. The text of the two sonnets only differs from Thorpe's edition in points of spelling and in the substitution of 'me' for 'you' in LXXI. 8, and of 'loue' for 'birth' in XXXII. 11. Thorpe's readings are the better. In a volume of MS. poetry now belonging to Mr. Bertram, of London, the well-known critic and bookseller, and dating about 1630, *Sonnet* II appears as a separate poem with a distinct title, which is not met with elsewhere. The textual variations from Thorpe's text induce Mr. Dobell to regard it as a transcript of a copy which was not accessible to Thorpe. Most of the poems in Mr. Dobell's manuscript volume bear their writers' names. But this sonnet is unsigned, and the copyist was in apparent ignorance that it was Shakespeare's work. In another similar MS. collection of poetry, which belonged to Mr. Dobell, and is now the property of an American collector, there figured several fragmentary excerpts from Shakespeare's sonnets in an order which is found nowhere else. The handwriting is of the early part of the seventeenth century, and shows slight variations in point of words, spelling, and punctuation from the printed text. In two instances distinct titles are given to the poems. One of these transcripts, headed 'Cruel', runs thus:—

Thou, Contracted to thine owne bright eys,  
Feedst thy light flame with selfe substantial fewell,  
Making a famine, where aboundance lies,  
Thy selfe thy foe to thy sweet selfe too cruell.  
Thou that art now the worlds fresh ornament,  
And onely herauld to ye Gaudy spring,  
Within thine owne Bud Buriest thy Contend,  
And tender Churle makes wast in niggarding.  
Pitty ye world or Els this Glutton bee  
To Eat ye worlds due by ye world & thee.  
When forty winters shall besiege thy brow  
And Dig deep tranches in thy beautyes field,  
Thy youths Proud liuery so gazd on now  
Wil be A totterd weed of small worth held.  
The Canker bloomes haue ful as deepe a dy  
As ye Perfumed tincture of ye roses.

The first ten lines correspond with *Sonnet* I. 5-14, the next four with *Sonnet* II. 1-4, and the last two with *Sonnet* LIV. 5-6.

but its main contents are 146 of Shakespeare's sonnets interspersed with all the poems of Jaggard's *Passionate Pilgrim* in the third edition of 1612, and further pieces by Heywood and others. A short appendix presents 'an addition of some excellent poems . . . by other gentlemen' which are all avowedly the composition of other pens.

There is no notice in the Stationers' Register of the formal assignment of the copyright of either Shakespeare's *Sonnets* or Jaggard's *Passionate Pilgrim* to Benson. But Benson duly obtained a licence on November 4, 1639, for the publication of the appendix to his volume. The following entry appears in the Stationers' Company's Register under that date:—

Entred [to John Benson] for his Copie under the hands of doctor Wykes and Master ffetherston warden *An Addicion of some excellent Poems to Shakespeares Poems* by other gentlemen. *viz.* His *mistris drawne*. and *her mind* by Benjamin Johnson. *An Epistle to Benjamin Johnson* by Ffrancis Beaumont. | His *Mistris shade* by R. Herrick. etc. vj<sup>d</sup>.<sup>1</sup>

The volume came from the press of Thomas Cotes, the printer who was at the moment the most experienced of any in the trade in the production of Shakespearean literature. Cotes had bought in 1627 and 1630 the large interests in Shakespeare's plays which had belonged respectively to Isaac Jaggard and Thomas Pavier. He printed the Second Folio of 1632 and a new edition of *Pericles* in 1635. The device which figured on the title-page of his edition of *Pericles*, as well as on that of Pavier's edition of that play in 1619, reappeared on Benson's edition of the *Poems* in 1640.

But, closely associated as the *Poems* of 1640 were, through the printer Cotes, with the current reissues of

The source  
of Benson's  
text.

<sup>1</sup> Arber, iv. 461.

Shakespeare's works, it may be doubted whether Benson depended on Thorpe's printed volume in his confused impression of the sonnets.<sup>1</sup> The word 'sonnets', which loomed so large in Thorpe's edition, finds no place in Benson's. In the title-pages, in the head-lines, and in the publisher's 'Advertisement', Benson calls the contents 'poems' or 'lines'. He avows no knowledge of 'Shakespeares Sonnets'. Thorpe's dedication to Mr. W. H. is ignored. The order in which Thorpe printed the sonnets is disregarded. Benson presents his 'poems' in a wholly different sequence, and denies them unity of meaning. He offers them to his readers as a series of detached compositions. At times he runs more than one together, without break. But on each detachment he bestows an independent descriptive heading. The variations from Thorpe's text, though not for the most part of great importance, are numerous.

The separate titles given by Benson to the detached sonnets represent all the poems save three or four to be addressed to a woman. For example, that which Thorpe numbered CXXII is entitled by Benson, 'Vpon the receit of a Table Booke from *his Mistris*,' and that which Thorpe numbered CXXV is headed, 'An intreatie for *her* acceptance.' A word of the text is occasionally changed in order to bring it into accord with the difference of sex. In *Sonnet* CIV. 1, Benson reads 'faire love' instead of Thorpe's 'faire friend', and in CVIII. 5, 'sweet love' for Thorpe's 'sweet boy'.

<sup>1</sup> Benson's preface 'To the Reader' is not very clearly phrased, but he gives no indication that the poems, which he now offers his public, were reprinted from any existing publication. His opening words run:—

'I here presume (under favour) to present to your view, some excellent and sweetely composed Poems, of Master William Shakespeare, Which in themselves appeare of the same purity, [as those which] the Authour himselfe then living avouched; they had not the fortune by reason of their Infancie in his death, to have the due accomodatiō of proportionable glory, with the rest

But it is surprising how rare is any alteration of this kind necessary in order to adapt the sonnets to a woman's fascinations. *Sonnet XX*, which is unmistakably addressed to a man, is headed 'The Exchange', and *Sonnet XXVI*, which begins 'Lord of my love', is headed 'A dutiful message'. But such other headings as, 'In Prayse of his Love,' 'An address to his scornerfull Loue,' 'Complaint for his Loues absence,' 'Self-flattery of her beauty,' &c., which are all attached to sonnets in what is known as the first section of Thorpe's volume, present no inherent difficulty to the reader's mind. The superscriptions make it clear that Benson did not distinguish the sonnets from amatory poems of a normal type.

Benson's text seems based on some amateur collection of pieces of manuscript poetry, which had been in private circulation. His preface implies that the sonnets and poems in his collection were not among those which he knew Shakespeare to have 'avouched' (i. e. publicly acknowledged) in his lifetime. By way of explaining their long submergence, he hazards a guess that they were penned very late in the dramatist's life. John Warren, who contributes new commendatory lines ('Of Mr. William Shakespear') for Benson's edition, writes of the sonnets as if the reader was about to make their acquaintance for the first time.<sup>1</sup> He says of them that they

*Will* make the learned *still* admire to see  
The Muses' gifts so fully infused on thee.

of his everliving Workes.' 'Everliving'—the epithet which Thorpe applied to Shakespeare—was in too common use as a synonym for 'immortal' to make it needful to assume that Benson borrowed it from Thorpe (cf. Shakespeare, *I Henry VI*, iv. 3. 51, 'That *ever-living* man of memorie Henry the Fifth').

<sup>1</sup> The other piece of commendatory verse by Leonard Digges confines itself to an enthusiastic account of Shakespeare's continued hold on the stage, and to the playgoer's preference of his work over that of Ben Jonson.

The theory that the publisher Benson sought his copy elsewhere than in Thorpe's treasury is supported by other considerations. *Sonnets* CXXXVIII and CXLIV, which take the thirty-first and thirty-second places respectively in Benson's volume, ignore Thorpe's text, and follow that of Jaggard's *Passionate Pilgrim* (1599 or 1612). The omission of eight sonnets tells the same tale. Among these are one of the most beautiful, 'Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?' No. XVIII, and the twelve-lined lyric numbered CXXVI, which some critics have interpreted as intended by Shakespeare to form the envoy to the sonnets addressed to the man. It is difficult to account for the exclusion of these two poems, and six others (Nos. XIX, XLIII, LVI, LXXV, LXXVI, and XCVI), except on the assumption that Benson's compiler had not discovered them.

Eighteenth-century editions of the sonnets.

Whatever may have been the source of Benson's text, his edition of them, although it was not reprinted till 1710, practically superseded Thorpe's effort for more than a hundred years.<sup>1</sup> The sonnets were ignored altogether in the great editions of Shakespeare which appeared in the early years of the eighteenth century. Neither Nicholas Rowe, nor Pope, nor Theobald, nor Hanmer, nor Warburton, nor Capell, nor Dr. Johnson, included them in their respective collections of Shakespeare's plays. None of these editors, save Capell, showed any sign of acquaintance with them. In collections of 'Shakespeare's Poems' forming supplementary volumes to Rowe's and Pope's edition of the plays,

<sup>1</sup> In 1654 there was issued a catalogue of books '*printed for Humphrey Moseley and are to be sold at his Shop at the Prince's Armes in St. Paule's Churchyard*'. Among the books noticed is 'Poems written by Mr. William Shakespeare Gent.' The entry suggests that Moseley caused to be printed and published a new issue of Shakespeare's poems, but there is no trace of any such edition.



which came out under independent editorship in the years 1719 and 1725 respectively, and were undertaken by independent publishers, the whole of Benson's volume of 1640 was reprinted; the sonnets were not separated from the chaff that lay about them there.<sup>1</sup> The volumes which were issued in the middle of the century under such titles as 'Poems on several occasions, by Shakespeare' (1750?) or 'Poems. Written by Mr. William Shakespeare' (1775), again merely reproduce Benson's work.

Only one publisher in the early years of the century showed any acquaintance with Thorpe's version. In 1710 Bernard Lintott included an exact reprint of it in the second volume of his 'A Collection of Poems (by Shakespeare)'. But no special authority attached to Lintott's reprint in the critical opinion of the day, and even Lintott betrayed the influence of Benson's venture by announcing on his title-page that 'Shakespeare's one hundred and fifty-four Sonnets' were '*all in praise of his mistress*'. Lintott's  
reprint of  
Thorpe's  
edition,  
1710.

It was not until 1766 that the critical study of Shakespeare's sonnets can be said to have begun. In that year Steevens included an exact reprint, of his copy of Thorpe's edition of 1609 (with the Wright imprint), in the fourth volume of his 'Twenty of the Plays of Shakespeare, Being the whole Number printed in Quarto During his Life-time, or before the Restoration, Collated where there were different Copies and Publish'd from the Originals'. The only comment that Steevens there made on the Steevens'  
reprint,  
1766.

<sup>1</sup> Charles Gildon, the editor of the supplementary volume of 1710, whose work was freely appropriated by Dr. Sewell, the editor of the supplementary volume of 1725, denied that any of Shakespeare's poems were sent to press before 1640, and refuted doubts of their authenticity on internal evidence only. Of the sonnets or 'Epigrams', as he calls them, he remarks: 'There is a wonderful smoothness in many of them that makes the Blood dance to its numbers' (p. 463).

sonnets was that ‘the consideration’ that they made their appearance with Shakespeare’s name, and in his lifetime, ‘seemed to be no slender proof of their authenticity’. Of their literary value, Steevens announced shortly afterwards a very low opinion. He excluded them from his revision of Johnson’s edition of the plays which came out in 1778.

Malone’s  
first critical  
edition,  
1780.

Malone produced the first critical edition of the sonnets in 1780, in his ‘Supplement to the Edition of Shakespeare’s Plays published in 1778’, vol. i. This revision of Thorpe’s text proved of the highest value. Steevens supplied some notes and criticisms, and in the annotations on *Sonnet CXXVII*, Malone and he engaged in a warm controversy, which occupied nearly six pages of small type, regarding the general value of Shakespeare’s sonnets. A year before Steevens borrowed of Malone a volume containing first editions of the *Sonnets* and *Lucrece*. On returning it to its owner, he pasted on a blank leaf a rough sketch in which Shakespeare is seen to be addressing William Atkinson, Malone’s medical attendant, in these words:—

If thou couldst, Doctor, cast  
The water of my sonnets, find their disease,  
Or purge my editor, till he understood them,  
I would applaud thee, &c.<sup>1</sup>

Steevens now insisted that ‘quaintness obscurity and tautology’ were inherent ‘in this exotik species of com-

<sup>1</sup> The volume containing this drawing is in the Malone collection in the Bodleian Library (Mal. 34). It contains the following note in Malone’s handwriting:—‘Mr. Steevens borrowed this volume from me in 1779 to peruse *The Rape of Lucrece* in the original edition, of which he was not possessed. When he returned it, he made this drawing. I was then confined by a sore throat, and was attended by Mr. Atkinson, the Apothecary, of whom the above figure, whom Shakespeare addresses, is a caricature.—E. M.’

position? Malone, in reply, confessed no enthusiasm for Shakespeare's sonnets, but claimed for their 'beautiful lines' a rare capacity for illustrating the language of the plays. He agreed that their ardent expressions of esteem could alone, with propriety, be addressed to a woman.

About the same date, Capell, who gave Malone some assistance, carefully revised in manuscript Thorpe's text, as it appeared in Lintott's edition of 1710. But his revised text remains unpublished in the library of Trinity College, Cambridge. Steevens was to the end irreconcilable, and in an Advertisement prefixed to his last edition of Shakespeare, 1793, he justified his continued exclusion of the sonnets from Shakespeare's works on the ground that the 'strongest Act of Parliament that could be framed would fail to compel readers into their service'.<sup>1</sup> The sonnets figured in Thorpe's text, revised by Malone, in the latter's edition of Shakespeare's works of 1790, in the Variorum of 1803, and in all the leading editions of Shakespeare's works that have been published since.

The reasoned and erudite appreciation, which distinguished eighteenth-century criticism of Shakespearean drama, gives historic interest to its perverse depreciations or grudging commendations of the Sonnets. Not till the nineteenth century was reached, did the tones of apology or denunciation cease. Nineteenth-century critics of eminence with a single exception soon reached a common understanding in regard to the transcendent merit of the poetry. Hazlitt, alone of

Nineteenth-century criticism.

<sup>1</sup> Steevens added: 'These miscellaneous poems have derived every possible advantage from the literature and judgement of their only intelligent editor, Mr. Malone, whose implements of criticism, like the ivory rake and golden spade in Prudentius, are on this occasion disgraced by the objects of their culture. Had Shakespeare produced no other works than these, his name would have reached us with as little celebrity as time has conferred on that of Thomas Watson, an older and much more elegant sonneteer.'

the great Shakespearean critics of the past century, declined to commit himself without damaging reserves to the strain of eulogy. At the same time differences have continued to prevail as to the precise significance of the poems, even amongst those whose poetic insight entitle their opinion to the most respectful hearing. Coleridge and Robert Browning refused to accept the autobiographic interpretation which commended itself to Wordsworth and Shelley. Great weight was attached to Hallam's censure of the literal theory: 'There is a weakness and folly in all excessive and misplaced affection, which is not redeemed by the touches of nobler sentiments that abound in this long series of sonnets.' The controversy is not yet ended. But the problem, in the present writer's opinion, involves in only a secondary degree vexed questions of psychology or aesthetics. The discussion must primarily resolve itself into an historical inquiry respecting the conditions and conventions which moulded the literary expression of sentiment and passion in Elizabethan England.

## VI

COPIES of the 1609 edition of the *Sonnets* are now very scarce. A somewhat wide study of sale catalogues of the past 150 years reveals the presence in the book market of barely a dozen during that period. Many years have passed since a copy was sold at public auction, and the only recent evidence of the selling value of the book is the fact that the copy No. IX, *infra*, which was sold by public auction in 1864 for £225 15s. 0d., was acquired privately, a quarter of a century later, by a collector of New York for a thousand pounds. Of the eleven traceable copies which are enumerated below, one lacks the title-page,



# SHAKE-SPEARES

## S O N N E T S.

Neuer before Imprinted.

---

AT LONDON

By G. Eld for T. T. and are

to be sold by John Wright, dwelling  
at Christ Church gate.

1609.

and two have facsimile title-pages; of the remaining eight, three have the Aspley imprint and five the Wright imprint. Of the eleven copies, eight are in England, and three in private libraries in America. Of the British copies six are in public collections. The Earl of Ellesmere and Mr. Huth seem to be the only private English owners.<sup>1</sup>

THE EDITION  
OF 1609.  
Description.

The original edition of Shakespeare's *Sonnets* appeared with two title-pages varying in the name of the bookseller in the imprint. One issue ran :—

SHAKE-SPEARES | SONNETS | Neuer before Im-  
printed. | AT LONDON | By *G. Eld* for *T. T.* and are | to be  
solde by *William Aspley*. | 1609.

The title-page of the other issue ran :—

SHAKES-PEARES | SONNETS | Neuer before Im-  
printed. | AT LONDON | By *G. Eld* for *T. T.* and are | to be  
solde by *Iohn Wright*, dwelling | at Christ Church gate. | 1609.

The volume is printed in quarto, containing in all forty leaves. Signature A, consisting of two leaves only, contains the title-page and dedication. The text of the *Sonnets* begins on signature B and ends on K recto. On K verso begins 'A Louers complaint. | By | William Shake-speare', and it ends with the close of the volume on L<sub>2</sub> verso. Thus the signatures run :—A (two leaves), B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, K in fours, and L (two leaves). There is no pagination; the leaves A<sub>1</sub>, A<sub>2</sub>, C<sub>4</sub>, D<sub>4</sub>, E<sub>4</sub>, F<sub>4</sub>, G<sub>4</sub>, H<sub>4</sub>, I<sub>4</sub>, are unsigned.

Of the copies in the British Museum, that in the Grenville

<sup>1</sup> It is impossible to determine whether the three copies mentioned in the following sale catalogues can be rightly identified with any of the eleven enumerated copies, or whether they had, and have, a separate existence :—

1. A copy in the library of Robert Harley, Earl of Oxford, which was sold by the bookseller Osborn, of Gray's Inn, in 1742.

2. A copy in the Duke of Marlborough's library at White Knights, sold in 1819 for £37.

3. A copy in the collection of James Boswell the younger, which was sold in 1825 for £38 17s. *od.*

No. I.  
British  
Museum.

collection (G. 11181), measuring  $6\frac{5}{8}'' \times 4\frac{5}{8}''$  and bound in red morocco, is in fine condition. This has the Aspley imprint. A few pages are stained. This is possibly the copy with Aspley imprint, priced at £30 in Messrs. Longman's sale list, *Bibliotheca Anglo-Poetica*, 1815, p. 301, which fetched £40 19s. 0d. at the sale of a portion of John Bellingham Inglis' library in June, 1826.

THE EDITION  
OF 1609.

British  
Museum  
(Grenville)  
copy.

The second Museum copy (C. 21. c. 44), which measures  $7\frac{1}{6}'' \times 5\frac{3}{16}''$ , has the title-page and last leaf in a dirty condition, but otherwise it is a good copy. Some pages are mended. It is bound in yellow morocco. It was apparently sold with the library of B. H. Bright in 1845 for £34 10s. 0d. It has the Wright imprint. It was reproduced in Shakspeare-Quarto Facsimiles, No. 30, by Charles Praetorius in 1886.

No. II.  
British  
Museum  
(Bright)  
copy.

Of the two copies in the Bodleian Library, the one which is reproduced here belongs to the Malone collection and is bound up with the first edition of *Lucrece*. It has the Aspley imprint, and measures  $7\frac{5}{16}'' \times 5\frac{1}{16}''$ , being inlaid on paper measuring  $9\frac{1}{8}'' \times 7\frac{1}{8}''$ . Malone acquired the volume in April, 1779, paying twenty guineas for the two quartos.<sup>1</sup> He lent the volume to Steevens in the same year. Malone subsequently inlaid and bound up the two tracts with quarto editions of *Hamlet* (1607), of *Love's Labour's Lost* (1598), of *Pericles* (1609 and 1619), and *A Yorkshire Tragedy* (1608). The whole volume was labelled 'Shakespeare Old Quartos, Vol. III.' It is now numbered Malone 34.

No. III.  
Bodleian  
(Malone)  
copy.

The second Bodleian copy was presented by Thomas Caldecott, and is now numbered Malone 886. The volume is bound up with 1594 editions of *Venus and Adonis* and *Lucrece*, which it follows. It has several manuscript notes in Caldecott's handwriting, chiefly dealing with misprints and illustrations from the plays. The copy has been cut down by the binder. It measures  $6\frac{3}{4}'' \times 4\frac{5}{16}''$ , and the date of the title-page, which bears Wright's name, has been cut off.

No. IV.  
Bodleian  
(Caldecott)  
copy.

A copy in the Capell collection at Trinity College, No. V.

<sup>1</sup> The Earl of Charlemont's MSS., i. 343 (in *Hist. Comm. MSS. Report*).

THE EDITION  
OF 1609.

Trinity  
College,  
Cambridge,  
copy.

No. VI.  
The John  
Rylands  
Library  
copy.

Cambridge, is defective, wanting eight leaves (A<sub>1</sub>-2, B<sub>1</sub>, K<sub>2</sub>-L<sub>2</sub>) including the title. The missing pages are supplied in manuscript by Capell, who transcribed a Wright title-page. The volume measures 7" × 5".

The John Rylands Library, in Manchester, contains a very fine copy which was acquired with Lord Spencer's Althorp collection, in 1892. It measures 7 $\frac{3}{8}$ " × 5", and has the Wright imprint. Earl Spencer purchased it in 1798, at the sale of Dr. Richard Farmer's library, for £8. It is in excellent condition, and is bound by Roger Payne in green morocco. Two peculiarities give the copy exceptional interest. On the last page of the volume, below the ornament, is the following manuscript note, in a somewhat ornamental handwriting of the early seventeenth century:—'Comendacons to my very kind & approued ffreind 23 : M:'. The numeral and capital at the end of the inscription may be the autograph of the donor in cipher, or may indicate the date of gift, March or May 23. Nothing is known of the history of this inscription, and there is no internal or external evidence to associate it in any way with Shakespeare. The copy was clearly presented by one friend to another about the date of publication. Another manuscript note in the volume is of more normal character. At the top of the title-page—to the left above the ornament—is the symbol '5<sup>d</sup>' written in the same hand as the inscription at the end. There is no doubt that this represents the cost of the volume, and it is curious to note that Edward Alleyn records in his account-book for June, 1609, that he paid fivepence for a copy of Shakespeare's *Sonnets*. The suggestion based on this fact that the Spencer copy originally belonged to Alleyn seems hazardous.<sup>1</sup>

No. VII.  
The Bridge-  
water House  
copy.

An interesting history attaches to the copy in the library of the Earl of Ellesmere at Bridgewater House. Originally acquired by the second Earl of Bridgewater, it was sold by

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Dibdin's *Aedes Althorpianae*, i. 194. Mr. Guppy, the librarian of the John Rylands library, has kindly given me a very full description of this volume and careful tracings of the manuscript inscriptions.



the last Duke of Bridgewater in 1802, apparently on the erroneous assumption that he owned another copy. It was then bought by George Chalmers for £1. At the sale of Chalmers' library, in 1842, it was repurchased for the library at Bridgewater House by the first Earl of Ellesmere, grandfather of the third Earl, the present owner, for £105. This copy was reproduced in photo-zincography, under the direction of Sir Henry James, in 1862. It has the Aspley title-page. It is in eighteenth-century binding. The measurements are  $7\frac{1}{4}'' \times 5\frac{1}{8}''$ .

THE EDITION  
OF 1609.

The copy belonging to A. H. Huth has the Wright imprint. It was for many years in the Bentinck library at Varel, near Oldenburg, and formed part of a volume of tracts which had been bound together in 1728. The volume was first noticed by Professor Tycho Mommsen in 1857, when the Bentinck library was dispersed by sale. It was purchased by Halliwell[-Phillipps], but was sold at a sale of his books in 1858, when it was acquired by Henry Huth, father of the present owner, (through the bookseller Lilly) for £154 7s. 0d. The copy is somewhat dirty, the top margins are cut close, and some of the print in the headlines is shaved.<sup>1</sup>

No. VIII  
The Huth  
copy.

Of the copies in America, the most interesting belongs to Mr. E. Dwight Church of New York. It has the Wright imprint, is bound in brown morocco by Charles Lewis, and measures  $6\frac{1}{8}'' \times 5''$ . At the end of the seventeenth century it was purchased by Narcissus Luttrell for one shilling. It subsequently belonged to George Steevens, whose autograph it bears, and it was sold in 1800 at the sale of Steevens' library for £3 19s. 0d. It was then acquired by the Duke of Roxburghe, at the sale of whose library in 1812 it fetched

No. IX  
The Dwight  
Church  
copy

<sup>1</sup> A copy of Shakespeare's 'Poems and Sonnets' dated 1609 is mentioned in the manuscript catalogue of the library of Earl Howe, at Gopsall, Leicestershire. The library was bequeathed, with the Gopsall property, to Lord Howe's ancestor, William Penn Assheton Curzon, by Charles Jennens, the virtuoso, and friend of Handel, in 1773. But the earliest edition of the *Sonnets* in Lord Howe's library at Gopsall proves on examination (which Lord Howe invited me there to make) to be Lintott's edition of 1710—in which the title-page of the 1609 edition of the *Sonnets* is reproduced.

THE EDITION  
OF 1607.

£21 10s. 0d. It was again sold at Evans' sale rooms in a valuable collection of 'Books of a Gentleman gone abroad', on Jan. 25, 1830, for £29 10s. 6d., and was afterwards acquired by George Daniel, whose monogram G. D. is stamped on the cover. It fetched at the Daniel sale of 1864 £225 15s. 0d., and afterwards passed into the collection of Almon W. Griswold of New York. Mr. Church purchased it of Mr. Griswold through Dodd, Mead & Co. of New York in 1889 for £1,000 (5,000 dollars). The title-page is reproduced in facsimile in the Grolier Club's 'Catalogue of original and early editions', 1895, p. 185.

No. X.  
The Halsey  
copy, for-  
merly at  
Rowfant.

Mr. F. R. Halsey, of New York, is the owner of the copy formerly belonging to Frederick Locker Lampson, of Rowfant, which was sold to Messrs. Dodd, Mead & Co. of New York in Jan. 1905. This copy has the Aspley imprint. It seems to be the 'imperfect' copy sold at the Jolley sale in London in 1844 for £33;<sup>1</sup> and successively in the libraries of Edward Vernon Utterson, at whose sale in 1852 it fetched £30 5s. 0d.; of J. O. Halliwell[-Phillipps], who sold it for £41 in 1856, when it was acquired by Sir William Tite. At the Tite sale in 1874 it seems to have been bought by Messrs. Ellis & White for the late Frederick Locker Lampson for £15 10s. 0d. The title and dedication are supplied in admirable facsimile by Harris. The volume is bound in extra-morocco by J. Clarke.

No. XI.  
The White  
copy.

A third copy in America, which belongs to Mr. W. A. White of Brooklyn, also has the title-page and dedication in facsimile. It measures  $6\frac{3}{4}'' \times 5''$ . The volume was bound by Charles Lewis and acquired by the present owner in New York in 1887.

POEMS OF  
1640.  
Description.

The edition of 1640 is an octavo of ninety-seven leaves without pagination, and is made up in two distinct parts—

<sup>1</sup> Dibdin writes somewhat mysteriously of Jolley's copy, despite its imperfections, thus: 'The history of the acquisition of the Jolley copy is one of singular interest, almost sufficient to add another day to a bibliographical decameron. The copy is in pristine condition, and looks as if snatched from the press.' Bound up with the *Venus and Adonis* of 1594 (see *Venus and Adonis*, Census No. II, British Museum copy), it was acquired by Jolley for a few pence in a Lancashire ramble.

the first of five leaves and the second of ninety-two. The first part, of five leaves, is supplementary to the rest of the work. On the third and fourth leaves are respectively the signatures \*<sub>2</sub>, \*<sub>3</sub>, a form of signature which indicates that the sheet to which it is attached was prepared and printed after the rest of the volume was ready for the press. These supplementary pages contain a frontispiece facing the title, presenting a carefully-elaborated cut of the Droeshout engraving of the First Folio signed 'W. M. Sculpsit'. The engraver was William Marshall, an artist of repute. The lower half of the plate is occupied by eight lines of verse, of which the first six consist of three couplets drawn at haphazard from Ben Jonson's eulogy in the First Folio. The concluding couplet—

For ever live thy fame, the world to tell,  
Thy like no age shall ever parallel.

alone seems original.<sup>1</sup> The title-page of the supplementary leaves runs:—

*Poems:* | Written | by Wil. Shake-speare | Gent. | [Printer's device with motto 'Heb. Ddim. Heb. Ddiev.'] Printed at *London* by *Tho. Cotes*, and are | to be sold by *John Benson*, dwelling in | *St. Dunstan's Church-yard*. 1640.

On leaf \*<sub>2</sub> begins 'Address to the Reader', signed I. B., i. e. John Benson, the publisher and bookseller. On leaf \*<sub>3</sub> begins a piece of commendatory verse 'Vpon Master William Shakespeare, the Deceased Authour, and his Poems' occupying three pages and signed 'Leon. Digges'. On the back of leaf \*<sub>4</sub> are seven commendatory couplets headed 'Of Mr. William Shakespeare' and signed John Warren. There the first part of the volume ends.

The second and substantive portion of the volume follows immediately. It begins with a second title-page, identical at all points with the first, save for the omission of the date, 1640, in the last line. This title is printed on

POEMS OF  
1640.

The supplementary  
opening  
pages.

The substantive  
portion of  
the book.

<sup>1</sup> The first three couplets are respectively Jonson's lines 17, 18, 47, 48, and 3, 4.

POEMS OF  
1640.

the first leaf of a sheet bearing the signature A. The text begins on a leaf which is signed A<sub>2</sub>, and headed 'Poems by Wil. Shake-speare, Gent.' Thenceforth the signatures are regularly marked, viz. A<sub>2</sub>, A<sub>3</sub>-M<sub>4</sub> in eights. The contents become very miscellaneous and are by many hands after leaf G (recto), on which appears Shakespeare's last sonnet, CLIV. After an interval of four leaves, on G<sub>5</sub> (verso) begins *A Lovers Complaint*, which finishes on H<sub>2</sub> (verso), and is succeeded by Heywood's two 'Epistles' from *The Passionate Pilgrim* of 1612 (H<sub>3</sub> recto-K<sub>4</sub> recto). The following leaves down to L<sub>1</sub> (verso) are successively occupied by Marlowe's poem, 'Liue with me and be my loue', with Raleigh's reply (in the text, not of *The Passionate Pilgrim* but of *England's Helicon*); another [reply] of the same nature (from *England's Helicon*); 'Take oh take those lippes away' (from Fletcher's *Bloody Brother* in two stanzas, of which the first only appeared in *Measure for Measure*, iv. 1. 1-6); 'Let the bird of lowest lay' with the 'Threnes' (from Chester's *Loves Martyr*, 1601, where it is assigned to Shakespeare); 'Why should this a Desart be' (from *As You Like It*, iii. 2. 133-62); Milton's Epitaph from the Second Folio; Basse's sonnet from the First Folio; and a previously unprinted 'Elegie on the death of that famous Writer and Actor, Mr. William Shakespeare'. On signature L<sub>2</sub> (recto) is introduced a new section headed: 'An addition of some excellent poems, to those precedent, of renowned Shakespeare, by other gentlemen.' Sixteen separate poems follow with the following titles: 'His Mistresse Drawne', signed B. L.; 'Her minde', signed B[en] I[onson]; 'To Ben. Iohnson', signed F[rancis] B[eaumont]; 'His Mistris Shade' (from Herrick's *Hesperides*); 'Lavinia walking in a frosty morning'; 'A Sigh sent to his Mistresse'; 'An Allegorical allusion of melancholy thoughts to Bees', signed I. G.; 'The Primrose' (from Herrick's *Hesperides*); 'A Sigh' (by Thomas Carew); 'A Blush'; 'Orpheus Lute'; 'Am I dispis'd because you say' (from Herrick's *Hesperides*); 'Vpon a Gentlewoman walking on the Grasse'; 'On his Love going to Sea' (assigned to Carew); and 'Aske me no more where *Ioue*

bestovves' (by Carew). A typed facsimile of the 1640 volume was issued by Alfred Russell Smith in 1885. POEMS OF  
1640.

The volume is comparatively common. The earliest mention of its sale by auction was in 1683, but the price it fetched is unknown. It sold for a shilling at Dr. Francis Bernard's sale in 1688. Just a century later a copy fetched 9s. at Thomas Pearson's sale. The highest price it has yet reached at public auction is £106, which was realized at the Turner sale in June, 1888. Since that date a dozen copies, in very varying condition, have been publicly sold at lower prices. Copies are in the following public libraries in England: The British Museum, two copies (one in Grenville collection, measuring  $5\frac{9}{16}'' \times 3\frac{9}{16}''$ , and one, C. 39. a. 40, without portrait); Bodleian Library, Oxford, Malone collection; Trinity College, Cambridge, Capell collection, measuring  $5\frac{1}{4}'' \times 3\frac{3}{8}''$ ; the Shakespeare Memorial Library, Birmingham; and the Shakespeare Memorial Library, Stratford-on-Avon. The copies  
in public  
libraries.

In America the public libraries possessing copies include: New York Public Library (Lenox collection), Boston Public Library (Barton collection).

Among private owners in America Mr. Robert Hoe of New York owns the very fine copy, bound by Charles Lewis, measuring  $5\frac{9}{16}'' \times 3\frac{3}{4}''$ , which fetched £106 at the sale in London at Sotheby's on June 18, 1888, of the library of Robert Samuel Turner. Heber's (imperfect) copy is now the property of Mr. H. H. Furness of Philadelphia.





# SHAKE-SPEARES

## S O N N E T S.

Neuer before Imprinted.



---

---

AT LONDON  
By *G. Eld* for *T. T.* and are  
to be solde by *William Aspley.*  
1609. 24





TO . THE . ONLIE . BEGETTER . OF .  
THESE . INSVING . SONNETS .  
M<sup>r</sup> . W . H . ALL . HAPPINESSE .  
AND . THAT . ETERNITIE .  
PROMISED .

BY .  
OVR . EVER . LIVING . POET .  
WISHETH .  
THE . WELL . WISHING .  
ADVENTVRER . IN .  
SETTING .  
FORTH .

T. T.





**S H A K E - S P E A R E S,**  
**S O N N E T S.**

**F**rom fairest creatures we desire increase,  
That thereby beauties *Rose* might neuer die,  
But as the riper should by time decease,  
His tender heire might beare his memory:  
But thou contracted to thine owne bright eyes,  
Feed'st thy lights flame with selfe substantiall fiewell,  
Making a famine where abundance lies,  
Thy selfe thy foe, to thy sweet selfe too cruell:  
Thou that art now the worlds fresh ornament,  
And only herauld to the gaudy spring,  
Within thine owne bud buriest thy content,  
And tender chorde mak'st wast in niggarding:  
Pitty the world, or else this glutton be,  
To eate the worlds due, by the graue and thee.

2

**V**Vhen fortie Winters shall beseige thy brow,  
And digge deep trenches in thy beauties field,  
Thy youthes proud liuery so gaz'd on now,  
Wil be a totter'd weed of final worth held:  
Then being askt, where all thy beautie lies,  
Where all the treasure of thy lusty daies;  
To say within thine owne deepe sunken eyes,  
Were an all-eating shame, and thriftlesse praise.  
How much more praise deseru'd thy beauties vse,  
If thou couldst answere this faire child of mine  
Shall sum my count, and make my old excuse  
Proouing his beautie by succession thine.

**B**

**This**

# SHAKE-SPEARES

This were to be new made when thou art ould,  
And see thy blood warme when thou feel'st it could,

3

**L**ooke in thy glasse and tell the face thou vewest,  
Now is the time that face should forme an other,  
Whose fresh repaire if now thou not renewest,  
Thou doo'st beguile the world, vnbleſſe some mother.  
For where is she so faire whose vn-ear'd wombe  
Disdaines the tillage of thy husbandry?  
Or who is he so fond will be the tombe,  
Of his selfe loue to stop posterity?  
Thou art thy mothers glasse and she in thee  
Calls backe the iouely Aprill of her prime,  
So thou through windowes of thine age shalt see,  
Dispight of wrinkles this thy goulden time.  
But if thou liue remembred not to be,  
Die single and thine Image dies with thee.

4

**V**Nthrifty louelinesse why dost thou spend,  
Vpon thy selfe thy beauties legacy?  
Natures bequest giues nothing but doth lend,  
And being franck she lends to those are free:  
Then beautious nigard why doost thou abuse,  
The bountious largesse giuen thee to giue?  
Profides vsurer why doost thou vse  
So great a summe of summes yet can'st not liue?  
For hauing traffike with thy selfe alone,  
Thou of thy selfe thy sweet selfe dost deceaue,  
Then how when nature calls thee to be gone,  
What acceptable *Audit* can'st thou leaue?  
Thy vnus'd beauty must be tomb'd with thee,  
Which vsed liues th'executor to be.

5

**T**Hose howers that with gentle worke did frame,  
The louely gaze where euery eye doth dwell  
Will play the tyrants to the very same,

And

SONNETS.

And that vnfaire which fairely doth excell:  
 For neuer resting time leads Summer on,  
 To hidious winter and confounds him there,  
 Sap checkt with frost and lustie leau's quite gon,  
 Beauty ore-snow'd and barennes euery where,  
 Then were not summers distillation left  
 A liquid prisoner pent in walls of glasse,  
 Beauties effect with beauty were bereft,  
 Nor it nor noe remembrance what it was.  
 But flowers distil'd though they with winter meere,  
 Leese but their show, their substance still liues sweete.

6

**T**hen let not winters wragged hand deface,  
 In thee thy summer ere thou be distil'd:  
 Make sweet some viall; treasure thou some place,  
 With beautits treasure ere it be selfe kil'd:  
 That vse is not forbidden vsery,  
 Which happies those that pay the willing lone;  
 That's for thy selfe to breed an ether thee,  
 Or ten times happier be it ten for one,  
 Ten times thy selfe were happier then thou art,  
 If ten of thine ten times refigur'd thee,  
 Then what could death doe if thou should'st depart,  
 Leauing thee liuing in posterity?  
 Be not selfe-wild for thou art much too faire,  
 To be deaths conquest and make wormes thine heire.

7

**L**oe in the Orient when the gracious light,  
 Lifts vp his burning head, each vnder eye  
 Doth homage to his new appearing sight,  
 Seruing with lookes his sacred maiesty,  
 And hauing climb'd the steepe vp heavenly hill,  
 Resembling strong youth in his middle age,  
 Yet mortall lookes adore his beauty still,  
 Attending on his goulden pilgrimage:  
 But when from high-moost pich with wery car,

B 1

Lit.

SHAKE-SPEARES

Like feeble age he reeleth from the day,  
The eyes (fore dutious) now conuerted are  
From his low tract and looke an other way:  
So thou, thy selfe out-going in thy noon:  
Vnlok'd on diest vnlesse thou get a sonne.

8

**M**Vlick to heare, why hear'st thou musick sadly,  
Sweets with sweets warre not, ioy delights in ioy:  
Why lou'st thou that which thou receau'st not gladly,  
Or else receau'st with pleasure thine annoy?  
If the true concord of well tuned sounds,  
By vnions married do offend thine care,  
They do but sweetly chide thee, who confounds  
In singlenesse the parts that thou should'st beare:  
Marke how one string sweet husband to an other,  
Strikes each in each by mutuall ordering;  
Resembling fier, and child, and happy mother,  
Who all in one, one pleasing note do sing:  
Whose speechlesse song being many, seeming one,  
Sings this to thee thou single wilt proue none.

9.

**I**S it for feare to wet a widdowes eye,  
That thou consum'st thy selfe in single life?  
Ah, if thou issuelles shalt hap to die,  
The world will waile thee like a makelesse wife,  
The world wilbe thy widdow and still weepe,  
That thou no forme of thee hast left behind,  
When euery priuat widdow well may keepe,  
By childrens eyes, her husbands shape in minde:  
Looke what an vnthrif in the world doth spend:  
Shifts but his place, for still the world inioyes it  
But beauties waste, hath in the world an end,  
And kept vnvsde the vsr so destroyes it:  
No loue toward others in that bosome sits  
That on himselfe such murderous shame commits.

10.

# SONNETS.

10

**F**Or shame deny that thou bear'st loue to any  
 Who for thy selfe art so vnprouident  
 Graunt if thou wilt, thou art belou'd of many,  
 But that thou none lou'st is most euident:  
 For thou art so possest with murderous hate,  
 That gainst thy selfe thou stick'st not to conspire,  
 Seeking that beauntious roose to ruinate  
 Which to repaire should be thy chiefe desire:  
 O change thy thought, that I may change my minde,  
 Shall hate be fairer log'd then gentle loue?  
 Be as thy presence is gracious and kind,  
 Or to thy selfe at least kind harted proue,  
 Make thee an other selfe for loue of me,  
 That beauty still may liue in thine or thee.

11

**A**S fast as thou shalt wane so fast thou grow'st,  
 In one of thine, from that which thou departest,  
 And that fresh bloud which yongly thou bestow'st,  
 Thou maist call thine, when thou from youth conuertest,  
 Herein liues wisdom, beauty, and increase,  
 Without this follie, age, and could decay,  
 If all were minded so, the times should cease,  
 And threescore yeare would make the world away:  
 Let those whom nature hath not made for store,  
 Harsh, featurelesse, and rude, barrenly perrish,  
 Looke whom she best indow'd, she gaue the more;  
 Which bountious giuft thou shouldst in bounty cherriish,  
 She caru'd thee for her scale, and ment therby,  
 Thou shouldst print more, not let that copy die.

12

**W**hen I doe count the clock that tels the time,  
 And see the braue day sunck in hidious night,  
 When I behold the violet past prime,  
 And sable curls or siluer'd ore with white:  
 When lofty trees I see barren of leaues,  
 Which erst from heat did canopie the herd

B 3

And

SHAKE-SPEARE'S

And Sommers greene all girded vp in sheaues  
 Borne on the beare with white and bristly beard:  
 Then of thy beauty do I question make  
 That thou among the wastes of time must goe,  
 Since sweets and beauties do them-selues forsake,  
 And die as fast as they see others grow,  
 And nothing gainst Times sieth can make defence  
 Saue breed to braue him, when he takes thee hence.

13

**Q** That you were your selfe, but loue you are  
 No longer yours, then you your selfe here liue,  
 Against this cumming end you should prepare,  
 And your sweet semblance to some other giue.  
 So should that beauty which you hold in lease  
 Find no determination, then you were  
 You selfe again after your selfes decease,  
 When your sweet issue your sweet forme should beare.  
 Who lets so faire a house fall to decay,  
 Which husbandry in honour might vphold,  
 Against the stompy gulls of winters day  
 And barren rage of deathis eternall cold?  
 O none but vnthrifts, deare my loue you know,  
 You had a Father, let your Son say so.

14

**N**ot fro n the stars do I my iudgement plucke,  
 And yet me thinkes I haue Astronomy,  
 But not to tell of good, or euil lucke,  
 Of plagues, of dearchs, or seasons quallity,  
 Nor can I fortune to breese mynuits tell;  
 Pointing to each his thunder, raine and winde,  
 Or say with Princes if it shal go wel  
 By oft predict that I in heauen finde.  
 But from thine eies my knowledge I deriue,  
 And constant stars in them I read such art  
 As truth and beautie shal together thrue  
 If from thy selfe, to store thou wouldst conuert

Or

.



SONNETS.

Or else of thee this I prognosticate,  
Thy end is Truthes and Beauties doome and date.

15

**W**hen I consider euery thing that growes  
Holds in perfection but a little moment.  
That this huge stage presenteth nought but shewes  
Whereon the Stars in secret influence comment.  
When I perceiue that men as plants increase,  
Cheared and checkt euen by the selfe-same skie:  
Vaunt in their youthfull sap, at height decrease,  
And were their braue state out of memory.  
Then the conceit of this inconstant stay,  
Sets you most rich in youth before my sight,  
Where wastfull time debateth with decay  
To change your day of youth to sullied night,  
And all in war with Time for loue of you  
As he takes from you, I ingraft you new.

16

**B**ut wherefore do not you a mightier waie  
Make warre vpon this bloudie tirant time? ;  
And fortifie your selfe in your decay  
With meanes more blessed then my barren rime?  
Now stand you on the top of happie houres,  
And many maiden gardens yet vnset,  
With vertuous wish would beare your liuing flowers;  
Much liker then your painted counterfeit:  
So should the lines of life that life repaire  
Which this (Times pensel or my pupill pen )  
Neither in inward worth nor outward faire  
Can make you liue your selfe in eies of men,  
To giue away, your selfe, keeps your selfe still,  
And you must liue drawne by your owne sweet skill,

17

**W**ho will beleeue my verse in time to come  
If it were filld with your most high deserts?

B 4

Though.

SHAKE-SPEARE'S

Though yet heauen knowes it is but as a tombe  
Which hides your life, and shewes not halfe your parts:  
If I could write the beauty of your eyes,  
And in fresh numbers number all your graces,  
The age to come would say this Poet lies,  
Such heauenly touches nere toucht earthly faces.  
So should my papers (yellowed with their age)  
Be scorn'd, like old men of lesse truth then tongue,  
And your true rights be term'd a Poets rage,  
And stretched miter of an Antique song.  
But were some childe of yours alieue that time,  
You should liue twise in it, and in my rime.

18.

SHall I compare thee to a Summers day?  
Thou art more louely and more temperate:  
Rough windes do shake the darling buds of Maie,  
And Sommers lease hath all too short a date:  
Sometime too hot the eye of heauen shines,  
And often is his gold complexion dimm'd,  
And euey faire from faire some-time declines,  
By chance, or natures changing course vntrim'd:  
But thy eternall Sommer shall not fade,  
Nor loose possession of that faire thou ow'st,  
Nor shall death brag thou wandr'st in his shade,  
When in eternall lines to time thou grow'st,  
So long as men can breath or eyes can see,  
So long liues this, and this giues life to thee,

19

DEuouring time blunt thou the Lyons pawes,  
And make the earth deuoure her owne sweet brood,  
Plucke the keene teeth from the fierce Tygers yawes,  
And burne the long liu'd Phœnix in her blood,  
Make glad and sorry seasons as thou fleet'st,  
And do what ere thou wilt swift-footed time  
To the wide world and all her fading sweets:  
But I forbid thee one most hainous crime,

0

SONNETS.

O carue not with thy howers my loues faire brow,  
Nor draw noe lines there with thine antique pen,  
Him in thy course vntainted doe allow,  
For beauties patterne to succeeding men.  
Yet doe thy worst ould Time dispight thy wrong,  
My loue shall in my verse euer liue young.

20

A Womans face with natures owne hand painted,  
Haste thou the Master Mistris of my passion,  
A womans gentle hart but not acquainted  
With shifting change as is false womens fashion,  
An eye more bright then theirs, lesse false in rowling:  
Gilding the object where-vpon it gazeth,  
A man in hew all *Hews* in his controwling,  
Which steales mens eyes and womens soules amaseth.  
And for a woman wert thou first created,  
Till nature as she wrought thee fell a dotinge,  
And by addition me of thee defeated,  
By adding one thing to my purpose nothing.  
But since she prickt thee out for womens pleasure,  
Mine bethy loue and thy loues vse their treasure.

21

S O is it not with me as with that Muse,  
Stird by a painted beauty to his verse,  
Who heauen it selfe for ornament doth vse,  
And euery faire with his faire doth reherse,  
Making a coopelment of proud compare  
With Sunne and Moone, with earth and seas rich gems:  
With Aprills first borne flowers and all things rare,  
That heauens ayre in this huge rondure hems,  
O let me true in lone but truly write,  
And then beleeue me, my loue is as faire,  
As any mothers childe, though not so bright  
As those Gould candells fixt in heauens ayer:  
Let them say more that like of heare-say well,  
I will not prayse that purpose not to sell.

C

MY glasse shall not perswade me I amould,  
 So long as youth and thou are of one date,  
 But when in thee times forwes I behould,  
 Then look I death my daies should expiate.  
 For all that beauty that doth couer thee,  
 Is but the seemely rayment of my heart,  
 Which in thy brest doth liue, as thine in me,  
 How can I then be elder then thou art?  
 O therefore loue be of thy selfe so wary,  
 As I not for my selfe, but for thee will,  
 Bearing thy heart which I will keepe so chary  
 As tender nurse her babe from faring ill,  
 Prefume not on thy heart when mine is flaine,  
 Thou gau'st me thine not to giue backe againe.

AS an vnperfect actor on the stage,  
 Who with his feare is put besides his part,  
 Or some fierce thing repleat with too much rage,  
 Whose strengths abundance weakens his owne heart;  
 So I for feare of trust, forget to say,  
 The perfect ceremony of loues right,  
 And in mine owne loues strength seeme to decay,  
 Ore-charg'd with burthen of mine owne loues might:  
 O let my books be then the eloquence,  
 And dumb presagers of my speaking brest,  
 Wlio pleade for loue, and look for recompence,  
 More then that tongue that more hath more exprest.  
 O learne to read what silent loue hath writ,  
 To heare wit eies belongs to loues fine wit.

THE eye hath play'd the painter and hath steeld,  
 My beauties forme in table of my heart,  
 My body's the frame wherein it's held,  
 And perfectue it is best Painters art.  
 For through the Painter must you see his skill,

# SONNETS.

To finde where your true Image pictur'd lies,  
Which in my bosomes shop is hanging still,  
That hath his windowes glazed with thine eyes:  
Now see what good-turnes eyes for eyes haue done,  
Mine eyes haue drawne thy shape, and thine for me  
Are windowes to my brest, where-through the Sun  
Delights to peepe, to gaze therein on thee

Yet eyes this cunning want to grace their art  
They draw but what they see, know not the heart.

25

**I** Et those who are in fauor with their stars,  
Of publike honour and proud titles boast,  
Whilst I whome fortune of such triumph bars  
Vnlookt for ioy in that I honour most;  
Great Princes fauorites their faire leaues spread,  
But as the Marygold at the suns eye,  
And in them-selues their pride lies buried,  
For at a frowne they in their glory die.  
The painefull warrior famosed for worth,  
After a thousand victories once foild,  
Is from the booke of honour rased quite,  
And all the rest forgot for which he toild:

Then happy I that loue and am beloued  
Where I may not remoue, nor be remoued.

26

**I** Ord of my loue, to whome in vassalage  
Thy meritt hath my dutie strongly knit;  
To thee I send this written ambassage  
To witnesse duty, not to shew my wit.  
Duty so great, which wit so poore as mine  
May make seeme bare, in wanting words to shew it;  
But that I hope some good conceipt of thine  
In thy soules thought (all naked) will bestow it:  
Til whatsoeuer star that guides my mouing,  
Points on me gratiouly with faire aspect,  
And puts apparrell on my tottered louing,

C 2

To

SHAKE-SPEARE,

To show me worthy of their sweet respect,  
Then may I dare to boast how I doe loue thee,  
Til then, not show my head where thou maist proue me

27

WEary with toyle, I haſt me to my bed,  
The deare reſoſe for lims with trauaill tired,  
But then begins a iourney in my head  
To worke my mind, when boddies work's expired.  
For then my thoughts (from far where I abide)  
Intend a zelous pilgrimage to thee,  
And keepe my drooping eye-lids open wide,  
Looking on darknes which the blind doe ſee.  
Saue that my ſoules imaginary ſight  
Presents their ſhaddoe to my ſightles view,  
Which like a iewel (hunge in glaſſy night)  
Makes blacke night beautilous, and her old face new.  
Loe thus by day my lims, by night my mind,  
For thee, and for my ſelfe, noe quiet finde.

28

HOW can I then returne in happy plight  
That am debar'd the benefit of reſt?  
When daies oppreſſion is not eaz'd by night,  
But day by night and night by day opreſt.  
And each (though enimies to ethers raigne)  
Doe in conſent ſhake hands to torture me,  
The one by toyle, the other to complaine  
How far I toyle, ſtill farther off from thee.  
I tell the Day to pleaſe him thou art bright,  
And do'ſt him grace when clouds doe blot the heauen:  
So flatter I the ſwart complexion'd night,  
When ſparkling ſtars twine not thou guil't th' eauen,  
But day doth daily draw my ſorrowes longer, (ſtronger  
And night doth nightly make greefes length ſeeme

29

WHen in diſgrace with Fortune and mens eyes,  
I all alone beweepe my out-caſt ſtate,

And

# SONNETS.

And trouble deafe heauen with my bootlesse cries,  
 And looke vpon my selfe and curſe my fate.  
 Wiſhing me like to one more rich in hope,  
 Featur'd like him, like him with friends poſſeſt,  
 Deſiring this mans art, and that mans ſkope,  
 With what I moſt inioy contented leaſt,  
 Yet in theſe thoughts my ſelfe almoſt deſpiſing,  
 Haplye I thinke on thee, and then my ſtate,  
 (Like to the Larke at breake of daye ariſing)  
 From ſullen earth ſings himns at Heauens gate,  
 For thy ſweet loue remembred ſuch welth brings,  
 That then I ſkorne to change my ſtate with Kings.

30

**W**hen to the ſeſſions of ſweet ſilent thought,  
 I ſommon vp remembrance of things paſt,  
 I ſigh the lacke of many a thing I fought,  
 And with old woes new waile my deare times waſte:  
 Then can I drowne an eye (vn-vid to flow)  
 For precious friends hid in death's dateles night,  
 And weepe a freſh loues long ſince canceled woe,  
 And mone th' expence of many a vanniſht ſight.  
 Then can I greeue at grieuances fore-gon,  
 And heauily from woe to woe tell ore  
 The ſad account of fore-bemoned mone,  
 Which I new pay as if not payd before.  
 But if the while I thinke on thee (deare friend)  
 All loſſes are reſtord, and ſorrowes end.

31

**T**hy boſome is indeared with all hearts,  
 Which I by lacking haue ſuppoſed dead,  
 And there raignes Loue and all Loues louing parts,  
 And all thoſe friends which I thought buried.  
 How many a holy and obſequious teare  
 Hath deare religious loue ſtolne from mine eye,  
 As intereſt of the dead which now appeare,  
 But things remou'd that hidden in there lie.

C 3

To

# SHAKE-SPEARES

Thou art the graue where buried loue doth liue,  
Hung with the tropheis of my louers gon,  
Who all their parts of me to thee did giue,  
That due of many, now is thine alone.

Their images I lou'd, I view in thee,  
And thou (all they) hast all the all of me.

32

**I**F thou suruiue my well contented daie,  
When that churle death my bones with dust shall couer  
And shalt by fortune once more re-suruiue:  
These poore rude lines of thy deceased Louer:  
Compare them with the bett'ring of the time,  
And though they be out-stript by euery pen,  
Reserue them for my loue, not for their time,  
Exceeded by the hight of happier men.  
Oh then voutsafe me but this louing thought,  
Had my friends Muse growne with this growing age,  
A dearer birth then this his loue had brought:  
To march in ranckes of better equipage:

But since he died and Poets better proue,  
Theirs for their stile ile read, his for his loue.

33

**E**VIll many a glorious morning haue I seene,  
Flatter the mountaine tops with soucraine cie,  
Kissing with golden face the meddowes greene;  
Guilding pale streames with heauenly alcumy:  
Anon permit the basest cloudes to ride,  
With ougly rack on his celestiall face,  
And from the forlorne world his visage hide  
Stealing vn'ceene to west with this d'sgrace:  
Euen so my Sunne one early morne did shine,  
With all triumphant splendor on my brow,  
But out alack, he was but one houre mine,  
The region cloude hath mask'd him from me now.  
Yet him for this, my loue no whit disdaineth,  
Suns of the world may staine, whē heauens sun stainteth.



SONNETS.

34

**W**Hy didst thou promise such a beauntious day,  
 And make me trauaile forth without my cloake,  
 To let bace cloudes ore-take me in my way,  
 Hiding thy brau'ry in their rotten smoke.  
 Tis not enough that through the cloude thou breake,  
 To dry the raine on my storme-beaten face,  
 For no man well of such a salue can speake,  
 That heales the wound, and cures not the disgrace:  
 Nor can thy shame giue phisicke to my grieve,  
 Though thou repent, yet I haue still the losse,  
 Th' offenders sorrow lends but weake reliefe  
 To him that beares the strong offenses losse.  
 Ah but those teares are pearlie which thy loue sheeds,  
 And they are rich, and ranfome all ill deeds.

35

**N**O more bee greeu'd at that which thou hast done,  
 Roses haue thornes, and silver fountaines mud,  
 Cloudes and eclipses stain both Moone and Sunne,  
 And loathsome canker liues in sweetest bud.  
 All men make faults, and euen I in this,  
 Authorizing thy trespass with compare;  
 My selfe corrupting saluing thy amisse,  
 Excusing their sins more then their sins are:  
 For to thy sensuall fault I bring in sence,  
 Thy aduerse party is thy Aduocate,  
 And gainst my selfe a lawfull plea commence,  
 Such ciuill war is in my loue and hate,  
 That I an accessary needs must be,  
 To that sweet theefe which souerely robs from me,

36

**I** Et me confesse that we two must be twaine,  
 Although our vndeuided loues are one:  
 So shall those blots that do with me remaine,  
 Without thy helpe, by me be borne alone.  
 In our two loues there is but one respect,

Though

SHAKE-SPEARES

Though in our liues a seperable spight,  
Which though it alter not loues sole effect,  
Yet doth it steale sweet houres from loues delight,  
I may not euer-more acknowledge thee,  
Least my bewailed guilt should do thee shame,  
Nor thou with publike kindnesse honour me,  
Vnlesse thou take that, honour from thy name:  
But doe not so, I loue thee in such sort,  
As thou being mine, mine is thy good report.

37

**A**S a decrepit father takes delight,  
To see his astiue childe do deeds of youth,  
So I, made lame by Fortunes dearest spight  
Take all my comfort of thy worth and truth.  
For whether beauty, birth, or wealth, or wit,  
Or any of these all, or all, or more  
Intituled in their parts, do crowned sit,  
I make my loue ingrafted to this store:  
So then I am not lame, poore, nor dispir'd,  
Whilst that this shadow doth such substance giue,  
That I in thy abundance am suffic'd,  
And by a part of all thy glory liue:  
Looke what is best, that best I wish in thee,  
This wish I haue, then ten times happy me.

38

**H**OW can my Muse want subiect to inuent  
While thou dost breath that poor'st into my verse,  
Thine owne sweet argument, to excellent,  
For euery vulgar paper to rehearse:  
Oh giue thy selfe the thanks if ought in me,  
Worthy perusal stand against thy sight,  
For who's so dumbe that cannot write to thee,  
When thou thy selfe dost giue inuention light?  
Be thou the tenth Muse, ten times more in worth  
Then those old nine which rimers inuocate,  
And he that calls on thee, let him bring forth

Eternall

SONNETS.

Eternal numbers to out-live long date.

If my slight Muse doe please these curious daies,  
The paine be mine, but thine shal be the praise.

39

**O**H how thy worth with manners may I sing,  
When thou art all the better part of me?  
What can mine owne praise to mine owne selfe bring;  
And what is't but mine owne when I praise thee,  
Euen for this, let vs deuided liue,  
And our deare loue loose name of single one,  
That by this seperation I may giue:  
That due to thee which thou deseru'lt alone:  
Oh absence what a torment wouldst thou proue,  
Were it not thy soure leisure gaue sweet leaue,  
To entertaine the time with thoughts of loue,  
VVhich time and thoughts so sweetly dost deceiue,  
And that thou teachest how to make one twaine,  
By praising him here who doth hence remaine.

40

**T**Ake all my loues, my loue, yea take them all,  
What hast thou then more then thou hadst before?  
No loue, my loue, that thou maist true loue call,  
All mine was thine, before thou hadst this more:  
Then if for my loue, thou my loue receiuest,  
I cannot blame thee, for my loue thou vshest,  
But yet be blam'd, if thou this selfe deceauest  
By wilfull taste of what thy selfe refushest.  
I doe forgiue thy robb'rie gentle theefe  
Although thou steale thee all my pouerty:  
And yet loue knowes it is a greater grieffe  
To beare loues wrong, then hates knowne iniury.  
Lasciuious grace, in whom all ill wel shoues,  
Kill me with spights yet we must not be foes.

41

**T**Hose pretty wrongs that liberty commits,  
When I am some-time absent from thy heart,

D

Thy

SHAKESPEARE.

Thy beautie, and thy yeares full well befits,  
 For full temptation followes where thou art.  
 Gentle thou art, and therefore to be wonne,  
 Beautious thou art, therefore to be assailed.  
 And when a woman woes, what womans sonne,  
 Will four ely leaue her till he haue preuailed.  
 Aye me but yet thou mightst my seate forbeare,  
 And chide thy beauty, and thy straying youth,  
 Who lead thee in their ryot euen there  
 Where thou art forst to breake a two-fold truth:  
     Hers by thy beauty tempting her to thee,  
     Thine by thy beautie beeing false to me.

42

**T**hat thou hast her it is not all my grieve,  
 And yet it may be said I lou'd her deerely,  
 That she hath thee is of my wayling cheefe,  
 A losse in loue that touches me more neerely.  
 Louing offenders thus I will excuse yee,  
 Thou doost loue her, because thou knowst I loue her,  
 And for my sake euen so doth she abuse me,  
 Suffring my friend for my sake to approoue her,  
 If I loose thee, my losse is my loues gaine,  
 And loosing her, my friend hath found that losse,  
 Both finde each other, and I loose both twaine,  
 And both for my sake lay on me this crosse,  
     But here's the ioy, my friend and I are one,  
     Sweete flattery, then she loues but me alone.

43

**W**hen most I winke then doe mine eyes best see,  
     For all the day they view things vnrespected,  
 But when I sleepe, in dreames they looke on thee,  
 And darkely bright, are bright in darke directed.  
 Then thou whose shaddow shaddowes doth make bright,  
 How would thy shaddowes forme, forme happy show,  
 To the cleere day with thy much cleerer light,  
 When to va-seeing eyes thy shade shines so?

How

# SONNETS.

How would (I say) mine eyes be blessed made,  
By looking on thee in the living day?  
When in dead night their faire imperfect shade,  
Through heavy sleepe on sightlesse eyes doth stay?  
All dayes are nights to see till I see thee,  
And nights bright daies when dreams do shew thee me,

44

**I**F the dull substance of my flesh were thought,  
Iniurious distance should not stop my way,  
For then dispiht of space I would be brought,  
From limits farre remote, where thou doost stay,  
No matter then although my foote did stand  
Vpon the farthest earth remou'd from thee,  
For nimble thought can iumpe both sea and land,  
As soone as thinke the place where he would be.  
But ah, thought kills me that I am not thought  
To leape large lengths of miles when thou art gone,  
But that so much of earth and water wrought,  
I must attend, times leasure with my mone.  
Receiuing naughts by elements so slowe,  
But heauie teares, badges of eithers woe.

45

**T**He other two, slight ayre, and purging fire,  
Are both with thee, where euer I abide,  
The first my thought, the other my desire,  
These present absent with swift motion slide.  
For when these quicker Elements are gone  
In tender Embassie of love to thee,  
My life being made of foure, with two alone,  
Sinkes downe to death, oppress'd with melancholie.  
Vnill liues composition be recured,  
By those swift messengers return'd from thee,  
Who euen but now come back againe assured,  
Of their faire health, recounting it to me.  
This told, I ioy, but then no longer glad,  
I send them back againe and straight grow sad.

D 2

Mine

46

**M**ine eye and heart are at a mortall warre,  
 How to deuide the conquest of thy sight,  
 Mine eye, my heart their pictures sight would barre,  
 My heart, mine eye the freedome of that right,  
 My heart doth plead that thou in him doost lye,  
 (A closet neuer pearst with christall eyes)  
 But the defendant doth that plea deny,  
 And sayes in him their faire appearance lyes.  
 To side this title is impannelled  
 A quest of thoughts, all tennants to the heart,  
 And by their verdict is determined  
 The cleere eyes moyitie, and the deare hearts part.  
 As thus, mine eyes due is their outward part,  
 And my hearts right, their inward loue of heart.

47

**B**etwixt mine eye and heart a league is tooke,  
 And each doth good turnes now vnto the other,  
 When that mine eye is famisht for a looke,  
 Or heart in loue with sighes himselfe doth smother;  
 With my loues picture then my eye doth feast,  
 And to the painted banquet bids my heart:  
 An other time mine eye is my hearts guest,  
 And in his thoughts of loue doth share a part.  
 So either by thy picture or my loue,  
 Thy selfe away, are present still with me,  
 For thou nor farther then my thoughts canst moue,  
 And I am still with them, and they with thee.  
 Or if they sleepe, thy picture in my sight  
 Awakes my heart, to hearts and eyes delight.

48

**H**ow carefull was I when I tooke my way,  
 Each trifle vnder truest barres to thrust,  
 That to my vse it might vn-vsed stay  
 From hands of falsehood, in sure wards of trust?  
 But thou, to whom my iewels trifles are,

Most

# SONNETS.

Most worthy comfort, now my greatest griefe,  
 Thou best of deereſt, and mine onely care,  
 Art left the prey of eucry vulgar theeſe.  
 I hee haue I not lockt vp in any cheſt,  
 Saue where thou art nor though I feele thou art,  
 Within the gentle cloſe of my breaſt,  
 From whence at pleaſure thou maiſt come and part,  
 And euen thence thou wilt be ſtolne I feare.  
 For truth prooues thee uiſh for a prize ſo deare.

49

**A**gainſt that time (if euer that time come)  
 When I ſhall ſee thee frowne on my defects,  
 When as thy loue hath caſt his ymoſt ſunne,  
 Could to that audite by aduſ'd reſpects,  
 Againſt that time when thou ſhalt ſtrangeſy paſſe,  
 And ſcarcely greeete me with that ſunne thine eye,  
 When loue conuerted from the thing it was  
 Shall reaſons finde of ſetled grauitie.  
 Againſt that time do I inſconce me here  
 Within the knowledge of mine owne deſart,  
 And this my hand, againſt my ſelfe vpreare,  
 To guard the lawfull reaſons on thy part,  
 To leaue poore me, thou haſt the ſtrength of lawes,  
 Since why to loue, I can alledge no cauſe.

50

**H**ow heauie doe I iourney on the way,  
 When what I ſeeke (my wearie trauels end)  
 Doth teach that eaſe and that reſpoſe to ſay  
 Thus farre the miles are meaſurde from thy friend.  
 The beaſt that beares me, tired with my woe,  
 Plods duly on, to beare that waight in me,  
 As if by ſome inſtinct the wretch did know  
 His rider lou'd not ſpeed being made from thee:  
 The bloody ſpurre cannot prouoke him on,  
 That ſome-times anger thruſts into his hide,  
 Which heauily he anſwers with a grone,

D 3

More

SHAKE-SPEARES.

More sharpe to me then spurring to his side,  
For that same grone doth put this in my mind,  
My greefe lies onward and my ioy behind.

51

**T**Hus can my loue excuse the slow offence,  
Of my dull bearer, when from thee I speed,  
From where thou art, why should I halt me thence,  
Till I returne of posting is noe need.  
O what excuse will my poore beast then find,  
When swift extremity can seeme but slow,  
Then should I spurre though mounted on the wind,  
In winged speed no motion sha'l I know,  
Then can no horse with my desire keepe pace,  
Therefore desire (of perfects loue being made)  
Shall naigh noe dull flesh in his fiery race,  
But loue, for loue, thus shall excuse my iade,  
Since from thee going, he went wilfull slow,  
Towards thee ile run, and giue him leaue to goe.

52

**S**O am I as the rich whose blessed key,  
Can bring him to his sweet vp-locked treasure,  
The which he will not eu'ry hower suruay,  
For blunting the fine point of seldome pleasure,  
Therefore are feasts so sollemne and so rare,  
Since sildom comming in the long yeare set,  
Like stones of worth they thinly placed are,  
Or captaines Iewells in the carconet.  
So is the time that keepes you as my chest,  
Or as the ward-robe which the robe doth hide,  
To make some speciall instant speciall blest,  
By new vnfouling his imprison'd pride.  
Blessed are you whose worthinesse giues skope,  
Being had to tryumph, being lackt to hope.

53

**W**Hat is your substance, whereof are you made,  
That millions of strange shaddowes on you tend?  
Since



SONNETS.

Since euery one, hath euery one, one shade,  
 And you but one, can euery shaddow lend:  
 Describe *Adonis* and the counterfet,  
 Is poorly immitated after you,  
 On *Hellens* cheeke all art of beautie set,  
 And you in *Grecian* tizes are painted new:  
 Speake of the spring, and foyzon of the yeare,  
 The one doth shaddow of your beautie show,  
 The other as your bountie doth appeare,  
 And you in euery blessed shape we know.  
 In all externall grace you haue some part,  
 But you like none, none you for constant heart.

54

**O**H how much more doth beautie beautilous seeme,  
 By that sweet ornament which truth doth giue,  
 The Rose looks faire, but fairer we it deeme  
 For that sweet odor, which doth in it liue:  
 The Canker bloomes haue full as deepe a die,  
 As the perfumed tincture of the Roses,  
 Hang on such thornes, and play as wantonly,  
 When sommers breath their masked buds discloses:  
 But for their virtue only is their show,  
 They liue vnwoo'd, and vnrespected fade,  
 Die to themselues. Sweet Roses doe not so,  
 Of their sweet deathes, are sweetest odors made:  
 And so of you, beautilous and louely youth;  
 When that shall vade, by verse distils your truth.

55

**N**Ot marble, nor the gilded monument,  
 Of Princes shall out-liue this powrefull rime;  
 But you shall shine more bright in these contents  
 Than vnswep't stone, besmeer'd with fluttish time.  
 When wastefull warre shall *Statues* ouer-turne,  
 And broiles roote out the worke of masonry,  
 Nor *Mars* his sword, nor warres quick fire shall burne:  
 The liuing record of your memory.

Gainst

SHAKESPEARES.

Gainst death, and all obliuious enmity  
 Shall you pace forth, your praise shall still finde roome,  
 Euen in the eyes of all posterity  
 That weare this world out to the ending doome.  
 So til the iudgement that your selfe arise,  
 You liue in this, and dwell in louers eies.

56

Sweet loue renew thy force, be it not said  
 Thy edge should blunter be then appetite,  
 Which but too daie by feeding is alaid,  
 To morrow sharpned in his former might.  
 So loue be thou, although too daie thou fill  
 Thy hungrie eies, cuen till they winck with fulnesse,  
 Too morrow see againe, and doe not kill  
 The spirit of Loue, with a perpetual dulnesse:  
 Let this sad *Intريم* like the Ocean be  
 Which parts the shore, where two contracted new,  
 Come daily to the banckes, that when they see:  
 Returne of loue, more blest may be the view.  
 As cal it Winter, which being ful of care,  
 Makes Somers welcome, thrice more wish'd, more rare?

57

Being your slaue what should I doe but tend,  
 Vpon the houres, and times of your desire?  
 I haue no precious time at al to spend;  
 Nor seruices to doe til you require.  
 Nor dare I chide the world without end houre,  
 Whilst I (my soueraine) watch the clock for you,  
 Nor thinke the bitternesse of absence sowre,  
 VVhen you haue bid your seruant once adieue,  
 Nor dare I question with my icalous thought,  
 VVhere you may be, or your affaires suppose,  
 But like a sad slaue stay and thinke of nought  
 Saue where you are, how happy you make those.  
 So true a foole is loue, that in your Will,  
 (Though you doe any thing) he thinkes no ill.

58

SONNETS.

58

**T**Hat God forbid, that made me first your slaue,  
 I should in thought controule your times of pleasure,  
 Or at your hand th' account of houres to craue,  
 Being your vassail bound to staie your leisure.  
 Oh let me suffer (being at your beck)  
 Th' imprison'd absence of your libertie,  
 And patience tame, to sufferance bide each check,  
 Without accusing you of iniury,  
 Be where you list, your charter is so strong,  
 That you your selfe may priuiledge your time  
 To what you will, to you it doth belong,  
 Your selfe to pardon of selfe-doing crime.  
 I am to waite, though waiting so be hell,  
 Not blame your pleasure be it ill or well.

59

**I**F their bee nothing new, but that which is,  
 Hath beene before, how are our braines beguild,  
 Which laboring for inuention beare amisse  
 The second burthen of a former child?  
 Oh that record could with a back-ward looke,  
 Euen of fūe hundreth courses of the Sunne,  
 Show me your image in some antique booke,  
 Since minde at first in carrecter was done.  
 That I might see what the old world could say,  
 To this composed wonder of your frame,  
 Whether we are mended, or where better they,  
 Or whether reuolution be the same.  
 Oh sure I am the wits of former daies,  
 To subiects worse haue giuen admiring praise.

60

**L**Ike as the waues make towards the pibled shore,  
 So do our minuites hasten to their end,  
 Each changing place with that which goes before,  
 In sequent toile all forwards do contend.  
 Natiuity once in the maine of light,

E

Crawl

SHAKESPEARE

Crawles to maturity, wherewith being crown'd,  
Crooked eclipses gainst his glory fight,  
And time that gaue, doth now his gift confound.  
Time doth transfixe the flourish set on youth,  
And delues the paralets in beauties brow,  
Feedes on the rarities of natures truth,  
And nothing stands but for his scythe to mow.  
And yet to times in hope, my verse shall stand  
Praising thy worth, despite his cruell hand.

61

**I**S it thy wil, thy Image should keepe open  
My heauy eies to the weary night?  
Dost thou desire my slumbers should be broken,  
While shadowes like to thee do mocke my sight?  
Is it thy spirit that thou send'st from thee  
So farre from home into my deeds to pry,  
To find out shames and idle houres in me,  
The skope and tenure of thy Ielousie?  
O no, thy loue though much, is not so great,  
It is my loue that keepes mine eie awake,  
Mine owne true loue that doth my rest defeat,  
To plaie the watch-man euer for thy sake,  
For thee watch I, whilst thou dost wake elsewhere,  
From me farre of, with others all to neere.

62

**S**Inne of selfe-loue possesseth al mine eie,  
And all my soule, and al my euery part;  
And for this sinne there is no remedie,  
It is so grounded inward in my heart.  
Me thinkes no face so gracious is as mine,  
No shape so true, no truth of such account,  
And for my selfe mine owne worth do define,  
As I all other in all worths surmount.  
But when my glasse shewes me my selfe indeed  
Beated and chopt with tand antiquitie,  
Mine owne selfe loue quite contrary I read

Selfe

SONNET 1.

Selfe, so selfe louing were iniquity,  
 T'is thee (my selfe) that for my selfe I praise,  
 Painting my age with beauty of thy daies;

63

**A**gainst my loue shall be as I am now  
 With times iniurious hand chrusht and ore-worne,  
 When houres haue dreind his blood and fild his brow  
 With lines and wrinces, when his youthfull morne  
 Hath trauaild on to Ages steepie night,  
 And all those beauties whereof now he's King  
 Are vanishing, or vanisht out of sight,  
 Stealing away the treasure of his Spring.  
 For such a time do I now fortifie  
 Against confounding Ages cruell knife,  
 That he shall neuer cut from memory  
 My sweet lous beauty, though my louers life.  
 His beautie shall in these blacke lines be seene, 3  
 And they shall liue, and he in them still Greene.

64

**W**hen I haue seene by times fell hand defaced  
 The rich proud cost of outworne buried age,  
 When sometime lostie towers I see downe rased,  
 And brasse eternall slaue to mortall rage,  
 When I haue seene the hungry Ocean gaine  
 Aduantage on the Kingdome of the shoare,  
 And the firme soile win of the watry maine,  
 Increasing store with losse, and losse with store,  
 When I haue seene such interchange of state,  
 Or state it selfe confounded, to decay,  
 Ruine hath taught me thus to ruminare  
 That Time will come and take my loue away.  
 This thought is as a death which cannot choose  
 But weepe to haue, that which it feares to loose.

65

**S**ince brasse, nor stone, nor earth, nor boundlesse sea,  
 But sad mortallity ore-swaies their power,

E 2

How

SHAKE-SPEARES

How with this rage shall beautie hold a plea,  
 Whose action is no stronger then a flower?  
 O how shall summers hunny breath hold out,  
 Against the wrackfull sledge of battring dayes,  
 When rocks impregnable are not so stoute,  
 Nor gates of Steele so strong but time decayes?  
 O fearefull meditation, where alack,  
 Shall times best Jewell from times chest lie hid?  
 Or what strong hand can hold his swift foote back,  
 Or who his spoile or beautie can forbid?  
 O none, vnlesse this miracle haue might,  
 That in black inck my loue may still shine bright.

66

**T**Yr'd with all these for restfull death I cry,  
 As to behold desert a begger borne,  
 And needie Nothing trimd in iollitie,  
 And purest faith vnhappily forsworne,  
 And gilded honor shamefully misplast,  
 And maiden vertue rudely strumpeted,  
 And right perfection wrongfully disgrac'd,  
 And strength by limping sway disabled,  
 And arte made tung-tide by authoritie,  
 And Folly (Doctour-like) controuling skill,  
 And simple-Truth miscaide Simplicitie,  
 And capriue-good attending Captaine ill.  
 Tyr'd with all these, from these would I be gone;  
 Saue that to dye, I leaue my loue alone.

67

**A**H wherefore with infection should he liue,  
 And with his presence grace impietic,  
 That sinne by him aduantage should atchieue,  
 And lace it selfe with his societie?  
 Why should false painting immitate his checke,  
 And steale dead seeing of his liuing hew?  
 Why should poore beautie indirectly seeke,  
 Roses of shadow, since his Rose is true?

Why

SONNETS

Why should he liue, now nature bankrout is,  
 Beggerd of blood to blush through liuely vaines,  
 For she hath no exchequer now but his,  
 And proud of many, liues vpon his gaines?  
 O him she stores, to show what welth she had,  
 In daies long since, before these last so bad.

68

**T**Hus is his cheeke the map of daies out-worne,  
 When beauty liu'd and dy'd as flowers do now,  
 Before these bastard signes of faire were borne,  
 Or durst inhabit on a liuing brow  
 Before the goulden tresses of the dead,  
 The right of sepulchers, were shorne away,  
 To liue a sccond life on second head,  
 Ere beauties dead fleece made another gay:  
 In him those holy antique howers are scene,  
 Without all ornament, it selfe and true,  
 Making no summer of an others greene,  
 Robbing no ould to dresse his beauty new,  
 And him as for a map doth Nature store,  
 To shew faultie Art what beauty was of yore.

69

**T**Hose parts of thee that the worlds eye doth view,  
 Want nothing that the thought of hearts can mends:  
 All tounge (the voice of soules) giue thee that end,  
 Vttring bare truth, euen so as foes Commend.  
 Their outward thus with outward praise is crownd,  
 But those same tounge that giue thee so thine owne,  
 In other accents doe this praise confound  
 By seeing farther then the eye hath showne.  
 They looke into the beauty of thy mind,  
 And that in guesse they measure by thy deeds,  
 Then churls their thoughts (although their eies were kind)  
 To thy faire flower ad the rancke smell of weeds,  
 But why thy odor matcheth not thy show,  
 The folye is this, that thou doest common grow.

E 3

That

SHAKE-SPEARES

70

**T**Hat thou are blam'd shall not be thy defect,  
For slanders marke was euer yet the faire,  
The ornament of beauty is suspect,  
A Crow that flies in heauens sweetest ayre.  
So thou be good, slander doth but approue,  
Their worth the greater beeing woo'd of time,  
For Canker vice the sweetest buds doth loue,  
And thou present'st a pure vnstained prime.  
Thou hast past by the ambush of young daies,  
Either not assayld, or victor beeing charg'd,  
Yet this thy praise cannot be soe thy praise,  
To tye vp enuy, euermore enlarged,  
If some suspect of ill maskt not thy show,  
Then thou alone kingdomes of hearts shouldst owe.'

71

**N**Oe Longer mourne for me when I am dead,  
Then you shall heare the surly sullen bell  
Giue warning to the world that I am fled  
From this vile world with vildest wormes to dwell:  
Nay if you read this line, remember not,  
The hand that writ it, for I loue you so,  
That I in your sweet thoughts would be forgot,  
If thinking on me then should make you woe.  
O if I say you looke vpon this verse,  
When I (perhaps) compounded am with clay,  
Do not so much as my poore name reliefe;  
But let your loue euen with my life decay.  
Least the wise world should looke into your mone,  
And mocke you with me after I am gon.

72

**O** Least the world should taske you to recite,  
What merit liu'd in me that you should loue  
After my death (deare loue) forget me quite,  
For you in me can nothing worthy proue.  
Valeise you would deuise some vertuous lye,

To



# SONNETS.

To doe more for me then mine owne desert,  
 And hang more praise vpon deceased I,  
 Then nigard truth would willingly impart:  
 O least your true loue may seeme false in this,  
 That you for loue speake well of me vntrue,  
 My name be buried where my body is,  
 And liue no more to shame nor me, nor you.  
 For I am sham'd by that which I bring forth,  
 And so should you, to loue things nothing worth.

73

**T**hat time of yeeare thou maist in me behold,  
 When yellow leaues, or none, or few doe hange  
 Vpon those boughes which shake against the cold,  
 Bare rind quiers, where late the sweet birds sang,  
 In me thou seest the twi-light of such day,  
 As after Sun-set fadeth in the West,  
 Which by and by blacke night doth take away.  
 Deaths second selfe that seals vp all in rest.  
 In me thou seest the glowing of such fire,  
 That on the ashes of his youth doth lye,  
 As the death bed, whereon it must expire,  
 Consum'd with that which it was nurisht by.  
 This thou perceu'st, which makes thy loue more strong,  
 To loue that well, which thou must leaue ere long.

74

**B**Ut be contented when that fell areft,  
 With out all bayle shall carry me away,  
 My life hath in this line some interest,  
 Which for memoriall still with thee shall stay.  
 When thou reuewest this, thou doest reuew,  
 The very part was consecrate to thee,  
 The earth can haue but earth, which is his due,  
 My spirit is thine the better part of me,  
 So then thou hast but lost the dregs of life,  
 The pray of wormes, my body being dead,  
 The coward conquest of a wretches knife,

To

SHAKESPEARES

To base of thee to be remembered,  
The worth of that, is that which it contains,  
And that is this, and this with thee remains.

75

**S**O are you to my thoughts as food to life,  
Or as sweet season'd shewers are to the ground:  
And for the peace of you I hold such strife,  
As twixt a miser and his wealth is found.  
Now proud as an inioyer, and anon  
Doubting the filching age will steale his treasure,  
Now counting best to be with you alone,  
Then betterd that the world may see my pleasure,  
Some-time all ful with feasting on your sight,  
And by and by cleane starued for a looke,  
Possessing or pursuing no delight  
Saue what is had, or must from you be tooke.  
Thus do I pine and surfet day by day,  
Or gluttoning on all, or all away,

76

**V**Hy is my verse so barren of new pride?  
So far from variation or quicke change?  
Why with the time do I not glance aside  
To new found methods, and to compounds strange?  
Why write I still all one, euer the same,  
And keepe inuention in a noted weed,  
That every word doeth almost sel my name,  
Shewing their birth, and where they did proceed?  
O know sweet loue I alwaies write of you,  
And you and loue are still my argument:  
So all my best is dressing old words new,  
Spending againe what is already spent:  
For as the Sun is daily new and old,  
So is my loue still telling what is told,

77

**T**Hy glasse will shew thee how thy beauties were,  
Thy dyall how thy pretious mynute waste,

The

# SONNETS.

The vacant leaues thy mindes imprint will beare,  
 And of this booke, this learning maist thou taste;  
 The wrinkles which thy glasse will truly show,  
 Of mouthed graues will giue thee memorie,  
 Thou by thy dyals shady stealth maist know,  
 Times theeuish progresse to eternitie.  
 Looke what thy memorie cannot containe,  
 Commit to these waste blacks, and thou shalt finde  
 Those children nurst, deliuerd from thy braine,  
 To take a new acquaintance of thy minde.  
 These offices, so oft as thou wilt looke,  
 Shall profit thee, and much enrich thy booke.

78

SO oft haue I inuok'd thee for my Muse,  
 And found such faire assistance in my verse,  
 As euery *Alien* pen hath got my vse,  
 And vnder thee their poesie disperse.  
 Thine eyes, that taught the dumbe on high to sing,  
 And heauie ignorance aloft to flie,  
 Haue added fethers to the learneds wing,  
 And giuen grace a double Maiestie.  
 Yet be most proud of that which I compile,  
 Whose influence is thine, and borne of thee,  
 In others workes thou doost but mend the stile,  
 And Arts with thy sweete graces graced be.  
 But thou art all my art, and doost aduance  
 As high as learning, my rude ignorance.

79

WHilst I alone did call vpon thy ayde,  
 My verse alone had all thy gentle grace,  
 But now my gracious numbers are decayde,  
 And my sick Muse doth giue an other place.  
 I grant (sweet loue) thy louely argument  
 Deserues the trauaile of a worthier pen,  
 Yet what of thee thy Poet doth inuent,  
 He robs thee of, and payes it thee againe,

F

He

SHAKESPEARE

He lends thee vertue, and he stole that word,  
From thy behauiour, beautie doth he giue.  
And found it in thy cheek: he can afford  
No praise to thee, but what in thee doth liue.

Then thanke him not for that which he doth say,  
Since what he owes thee, thou thy selfe doost pay,

80

O How I faint when I of you do write,  
Knowing a better spirit doth vse your name,  
And in the praise thereof spends all his might,  
To make me tounge-tide speaking of your fame.  
But since your worth (wide as the Ocean is)  
The humble as the proudest saile doth beare,  
My sawie barke (inferior farre to his)  
On your broad maine doth wilfully appeare.  
Your shallowest helpe will hold me vp a floate,  
Whilst he vpon your soundlesse deepe doth ride,  
Or (being wrackt) I am a worthlesse bote,  
He of tall building, and of goodly pride.

Then If he thriue and I be cast away,  
The worst was this, my loue was my decay.

81

O R I shall liue your Epitaph to make,  
Or you suruiue when I in earth am rotten,  
From hence your memory death cannot take,  
Although in me each part will be forgotten.  
Your name from hence immortall life shall haue,  
Though I (once gone) to all the world must dye,  
The earth can yeeld me but a common graue,  
When you intombd in mens eyes shall lye,  
Your monument shall be my gentle verse,  
Which eyes not yet created shall ore-read,  
And toungs to be, your beeing shall rehearse,  
When all the breachers of this world are dead,  
You still shall liue (such vertue hath my Pen)  
Where breath most breaths, euen in the mouths of men.

I grant

# SONNETS.

82

**I** Grant thou wert not married to my Mife,  
 And therefore maieſt without attaine ore-lookē  
 The dedicated words which writers vſe  
 Of their faire ſubieſt, bleſſing euery booke.  
 Thou art as faire in knowledge as in hew,  
 Finding thy worth a limmit paſt my praiſe,  
 And therefore art inforc'd to ſeekē anew,  
 Some freſher ſtampe of the time bettering dayes.  
 And do ſo loue, yet when they haue deuifde,  
 What ſtrained touches Rhethorick can lend,  
 Thou truly faire, wert truly ſimpathizde,  
 In true plaine words, by thy true telling friend.  
 And their groſſe painting might be better vſ'd,  
 Where cheekes need blood, in thee it is abuſ'd.

83

**I** Neuer ſaw that you did painting need,  
 And therefore to your faire no painting ſet,  
 I found (or thought I found) you did exceed,  
 The barren tender of a Poets debt:  
 And therefore haue I ſlept in your report,  
 That you your ſelfe being extant well might ſhow,  
 How faire a moderne quill doth come to ſhort,  
 Speaking of worth, what worth in you doth grow,  
 This ſilence for my ſinne you did impute,  
 Which ſhall be moſt my glory being dombe,  
 For I impaire not beautie being mute,  
 When others would giue life, and bring a tombe.  
 There liues more life in one of your faire eyes,  
 Then both your Poets can in praiſe deuife.

84

**W** Ho is it that ſayes moſt, which can ſay more,  
 Then this rich praiſe, that you alone, are you,  
 In whoſe confine immured is the ſtore,  
 Which ſhould example where your equall grew,  
 Leane penurie within that Pen doth dwell,

F 2

That

SHAKE-SPEARES

That to his subiect lends not some small glory,  
 But he that writes of you, if he can tell,  
 That you are you, so dignifies his story.  
 Let him but coppy what in you is writ,  
 Not making worse what nature made so cleere,  
 And such a counter-part shall fame his wit,  
 Making his stile admired euery where.  
 You to your beautilous blessings adde a curse,  
 Being fond on praise, which makes your praises worse.

85

**M**Y tounge-tide Muse in manners holds her still,  
 While comments of your praise richly compild,  
 Reserve their Character with goulden quill,  
 And precious phrase by all the Muses fil'd.  
 I thinke good thoughts, whilst other write good wordes,  
 And like vnlettered clarke still crie Amen,  
 To euery Himne that able spirit affords,  
 In polisht forme of well refined pen.  
 Hearing you praist, I say 'tis so, 'tis true,  
 And to the most of praise adde some-thing more,  
 But that is in my thought, whose loue to you  
 (Though words come hind-most) holds his ranke before,  
 Then others, for the breath of words respect,  
 Me for my dombe thoughts, speaking in effect.

86

**V**VAs it the proud full saile of his great verse,  
 Bound for the prize of (all to precious) you,  
 That did my ripe thoughts in my braine inhearse,  
 Making their tombe the wombe wherein they grew?  
 Was it his spirit, by spirits taught to write,  
 Aboue a mortall pitch, that struck me dead?  
 No, neither he, nor his compiers by night  
 Giuing him ayde, my verse astonished.  
 He nor that affable familiar ghost  
 Which nightly gulls him with intelligence,  
 As victors of my silence cannot boast,

I was

SONNETS.

I was not sick of any feare from thence.

But when your countenance fild vp his line,  
Then lackt I matter, that infeeble mine.

87

**F**arewell thou art too deare for my possessing,  
And like enough thou knowst thy estimate,  
The Charter of thy worth giues thee releasing:  
My bonds in thee are all determinate.  
For how do I hold thee but by thy granting,  
And for that ritches where is my deseruing?  
The cause of this faire guift in me is wanting,  
And so my pattent back againe is sweruing.  
Thy selfe thou gau'st, thy owne worth then not knowing,  
Or mee to whom thou gau'st it, else mistaking,  
So thy great guift vpon misprision growing,  
Comes home againe, on better iudgement making.  
Thus haue I had thee as a dreame doth flatter,  
In sleepe a King, but waking no such matter.

88

**V**hen thou shalt be dispode to set me light,  
And place my merrit in the eie of skorne,  
Vpon thy side, against my selfe ile fight,  
And proue thee virtuous, though thou art forsworne:  
With mine owne weakenesse being best acquainted,  
Vpon thy part I can set downe a story  
Of faults conceald, wherein I am attainted:  
That thou in loosing me, shall win much glory:  
And I by this wil be a gainer too,  
For bending all my louing thoughts on thee,  
The iniuries that to my selfe I doe,  
Doing thee vantage, duple vantage me,  
Such is my loue, to thee I so belong,  
That for thy right, my selfe will beare all wrong.

89

**S**ay that thou didst forsake mee for some fault,  
And I will comment vpon that offence,

F 3

Speake

SHAKE-SPEARES

Speake of my lamenesse, and I straight will halt:  
 Against thy reasons making no defence.  
 Thou canst not (loue) disgrace me halfe so ill,  
 To set a forme vpon desired change,  
 As ile my selfe disgrace, knowing thy wil,  
 I will acquaintance strangle and looke stranger:  
 Be absent from thy walkes and in my tongue,  
 Thy sweet beloued name no more shall dwell,  
 Least I (too much prophane) should do it wronge:  
 And haplie of our old acquaintance tell.

For thee, against my selfe ile vow debate,  
 For I must nere loue him whom thou dost hate.

90

Then hate me when thou wilt, if euer, now,  
 Now while the world is bent my deeds to crosse,  
 Ioyne with the spight of fortune, make me bow,  
 And doe not drop in for an after losse:  
 Ah doe not, when my heart hath scape this sorrow,  
 Come in the rereward of a conquerd woe,  
 Giue not a windy night a rainie morrow,  
 To linger out a purposed ouer-throw.  
 If thou wilt leaue me, do not leaue me last,  
 When other pettie griefes haue done their spight,  
 But in the onset come, so shall I taste  
 At first the very worst of fortunes might,  
 And other straines of woe, which now seeme woe,  
 Compar'd with losse of thee, will not seeme so.

91

Some glory in their birth, some in their skill,  
 Some in their wealth, some in their bodies force,  
 Some in their garments though new-fangled ill:  
 Some in their Hawkes and Hounds, some in their Horse,  
 And euery humor hath his adiunct pleasure,  
 Wherein it findes a ioy about the rest,  
 But these periculers are not my measure,  
 All these I better in one generall best.

Thy



SONNETS.

Thy loue is bitter then high birch to me,  
 Richer then wealth, prouder then garments cost,  
 Of more delight then Hawkes or Horses bee;  
 And hauing thee, of all mens pride I boast.  
 Wretched in this alone, that thou maist take,  
 All this away, and me most wretched make,

92

**B**Ut doe thy worst to steale thy selfe away,  
 For tearme of life thou art assured mine,  
 And life no longer then thy loue will stay,  
 For it depends vpon that loue of thine.  
 Then need I not to feare the worst of wrongs,  
 When in the least of them my life hath end,  
 I see, a better state to me belongs  
 Then that, which on thy humor doth depend.  
 Thou canst not vex me with inconstant minde,  
 Since that my life on thy reuolt doth lie,  
 Oh what a happy title do I finde,  
 Happy to haue thy loue, happy to die!  
 But whats so blessed faire that feares no blot,  
 Thou maist be false, and yet I know it not.

93

**S**O shall I liue, supposing thou art true,  
 Like a decciued husband so loues face,  
 May still seeme loue to me, though alter'd new:  
 Thy lookes with me, thy heart in other place,  
 For their can liue no hatred in thine eye,  
 Therefore in that I cannot know thy change,  
 In manies lookes, the false hearts history  
 Is writ in moods and frownes and wrinkles strange.  
 But heauen in thy creation did decree,  
 That in thy face sweet loue should euer dwell,  
 What ere thy thoughts, or thy hearts workings be,  
 Thy lookes should nothing thence, but sweetnesse tell.  
 How like *Eanes* apple doth thy beauty grow,  
 If thy sweet vertue answere not thy show.

**T**hey that haue powre to hurt, and will doe none,  
 That doe not do the thing, they most do shewe,  
 Who mouing others, are themselues as stone,  
 Vnmoued, could, and to temptation slow:  
 They right'y do inheritt heauens graces,  
 And husband natures ritches from expence,  
 They are the Lords and owners of their faces,  
 Others, but stewards of their excellence:  
 The sommers flowre is to the sommer sweet,  
 Though to it selfe, it onely liue and die,  
 But if that flowre with base infection meete,  
 The basest weed out-braues his dignity:  
 For sweetest things turne sowrest by their deedes,  
 Lillies that fester, smell far worse then weeds.

**H**ow sweet and louely dost thou make the shame,  
 Which like a canker in the fragrant Rose,  
 Doth spot the beautie of thy budding name?  
 Oh in what sweets doest thou thy finnes inclose!  
 That tongue that tells the story of thy daies,  
 (Making lasciuious comments on thy sport)  
 Cannot dispraise, but in a kinde of praise,  
 Naming thy name, blesses an ill report.  
 Oh what a mansion haue those vices got,  
 Which for their habitation chose out thee,  
 Where beauties vaile doth couer euery blot,  
 And all things turnes to faire, that eies can see!  
 Take heed (deare heart) of this large priuledge,  
 The hardest knife ill vs'd doth loose his edge.

**S**ome say thy fault is youth, some wantonesse,  
 Some say thy grace is youth and gentle sport,  
 Both grace and faults are lou'd of more and lesse:  
 Thou makst faults graces, that to thee resort:  
 As on the finger of a throned Queene,

The

# SONNETS.

The basest Jewell wil be well esteem'd:  
 So are those errors that in thee are seene,  
 To truths translated, and for true things deem'd.  
 How many Lambs might the sterne Wolfe betray,  
 If like a Lambe he could his lookes translate.  
 How many gazers mightst thou lead away,  
 If thou wouldst vse the strength of all thy state?  
 But doe not so, I loue thee in such sort,  
 As thou being mine, mine is thy good report.

97

**H**OW like a Winter hath my absence beene  
 From thee, the pleasure of the fleeting yeare?  
 What freezings haue I felt, what darke daies seene?  
 What old Decembers barenesse euery where?  
 And yet this time remou'd was sommers time,  
 The teeming Autumne big with ritch increase,  
 Bearing the wanton burthen of the prime,  
 Like widdowed wombes after their Lords decease:  
 Yet this abundant isleue seem'd to me,  
 But hope of Orphans, and vn-fathered fruite,  
 For Sommer and his pleasures waite on thee,  
 And thou away, the very birds are mute.  
 Or if they sing, tis with so dull a cheere,  
 That leaues looke pale, dreading the Winters neere.

98

**F**ROM you haue I beene absent in the spring,  
 When proud pide Aprill (drest in all his trim)  
 Hath put a spirit of youth in euery thing:  
 That heauie *Saturne* laught and leapt with him.  
 Yet nor the laies of birds, nor the sweet smell  
 Of different flowers in odor and in hew,  
 Could make me any summers story tell:  
 Or from their proud lap pluck them where they grew:  
 Nor did I wonder at the Lillies white,  
 Nor praise the deepe vermillion in the Rose,  
 They weare but sweet, but figures of delight:

G

Drawne

SHAKE-SPEARE.

Drawing after you, you patterne of all those.  
Yet seem'd it, Winter still, and you away,  
As with your shadow I with these did play.

99

**T**He forward violet thus did I chide,  
Sweet thee whence didst thou steale thy sweet that  
If not from my lous breath, the purple pride, (smels  
Which on thy soft cheeke for complexion dwells?  
In my lous veines thou hast too grosely died,  
The Lillie I condemned for thy hand,  
And buds of marierom had stolne thy haire;  
The Roses fearefully on thornes did stand,  
Our blushing shame, an other white dispaire:  
A third nor red, nor white, had stolne of both,  
And to his robbry had annex thy breath,  
But for his theft in pride of all his growth.  
A vengfull canker eate him vp to death.  
More flowers I noted, yet I none could see,  
But sweet, or culler it had stolne from thee.

100

**V**Here art thou Muse that thou forgetst so long,  
To speake of that which giues thee all thy might?  
Spendst thou thy furie on some worthlesse song,  
Darkning thy powre to lend base subiects light.  
Returne forgetfull Muse, and straight redeeme,  
In gentle numbers time so idely spent,  
Sing to the eare that doth thy laies esteeme,  
And giues thy pen both skill and argument.  
Rise resty Muse, my lous sweet face suruay,  
If time haue any wrinkle grauen there,  
If any, be a *Satire* to decay,  
And make times spoiles dispised euery where.  
Giue my loue fame faster then time wafts life,  
So thou preuentst his fieth, and crooked knife,

101

**O**H truant Muse what shalbe thy amends,

For

# SONNETS.

For thy neglect of truth in beauty di'd?  
 Both truth and beauty on my loue depends:  
 So dost thou too, and therein dignifi'd:  
 Make answer Muse, wilt thou not haply saie,  
 Truth needs no collour with his collour fixt,  
 Beautie no pensell, beauties truth to lay:  
 But best is best, if neuer intermixt.  
 Because he needs no praise, wilt thou be dumb?  
 Excuse not silence so, for't lies in thee,  
 To make him much out-live a gilded tombe:  
 And to be praisd of ages yet to be.  
 Then do thy office Muse, I teach thee how,  
 To make him seeme long hence, as he shoves now.

102

**M**Y loue is strengthened though more weake in see-  
 I loue not lesse, though lesse the show appeare, (ming  
 That loue is marchandiz'd, whose rich esteeming,  
 The owners tongue doth publish euery where.  
 Our loue was new, and then but in the spring,  
 When I was wont to greet it with my laies,  
 As *Philomell* in summers front doth singe,  
 And stops his pipe in growth of riper daies:  
 Not that the summer is lesse pleasant now  
 Then when her mournefull himns did hush the night,  
 But that wild musick burthens euery bow,  
 And sweets growne common loose their deare delight.  
 Therefore like her, I some-time hold my tongue:  
 Because I would not dull you with my songe.

103

**A**Lack what pouerty my Muse brings forth,  
 That hauing such a skope to show her pride,  
 The argument all bare is of more worth  
 Then when it hath my added praise beside.  
 Oh blame me not if I no more can write!  
 Looke in your glasse and there appeares a face,  
 That ouer-goes my blunt inuention quite,  
 Dulling my lines, and doing me disgrace.

G 2

Were

SHAKE-SPEARES.

Were it not sinfull then striving to mend,  
To marre the subiect that before was well;  
For to no other passe my verses tend,  
Then of your graces and your gifts to tell.  
And more, much more then in my verse can fit,  
Your owne glasse shoves you, when you looke in it.

104

TO me faire friend you neuer can be old;  
For as you were when first your eye I eyde,  
Such seemes your beautie still: Three Winters colde,  
Haue from the Forrests shooke three summers pride,  
Three beauctious springs to yellow *Autumne* turn'd,  
In processe of the seasons haue I seene,  
Three Aprill perfumes in three hot Iunes burn'd,  
Since first I saw you fresh which yet are greene.  
Ah yet doth beauty like a Dyall hand,  
Steale from his figure, and no pace perceiu'd,  
So your sweete hew, which me thinks still doth stann  
Hath motion, and mine eye may be deceaued.  
For feare of which, heare this thou age vnbred,  
Ere you were borne was beauties summer dead.

105

LET not my loue be cal'd Idolatrie;  
Nor my beloued as an Idoll show;  
Since all alike my songs and praises be  
To one, of one, still such, and euer so.  
Kinde is my loue to day, to morrow kinde,  
Still constant in a wondrous excellence,  
Therefore my verse to constancie confin'de,  
One thing expressing, leaues out difference.  
Faire, kinde, and true, is all my argument,  
Faire, kinde and true, varrying to other words,  
And in this change is my inuention spent,  
Three theams in one, which wondrous scope affords.  
Faire, kinde, and true, haue often liu'd alone.  
Which three till now, neuer kept seate in one.

When

SONNETS.

106

**W**Hen in the Chronicle of wasted time,  
 I see descriptions of the fairest wights,  
 And beautie making beautifull old rime,  
 In praise of Ladies dead, and lovely Knights,  
 Then in the blazon of sweet beauties best,  
 Of hand, of foote, of lip, of eye, of brow,  
 I see their antique Pen would haue exprest,  
 Euen such a beauty as you maister now.  
 So all their praises are but prophesies  
 Of this our time, all you prefiguring,  
 And for they look'd but with deuining eyes,  
 They had not still enough your worth to sing:  
 For we which now behold these present dayes,  
 Haue eyes to wonder, but lack tounge to praise.

107

**N**ot mine owne feares, nor the prophetick soule,  
 Of the wide world, dreaming on things to come,  
 Can yet the lease of my true loue controule,  
 Supposde as forfeit to a confin'd doome.  
 The mortall Moone hath her eclipse indur'de,  
 And the sad Augurs mock their owne prelage,  
 Incertenties now crowne them-selues assur'de,  
 And peace proclaimes Oliues of endlesse age.  
 Now with the drops of this most balmie time,  
 My loue lookes fresh, and death to me subscribes,  
 Since spight of him Ile liue in this poore rime,  
 While he insults ore dull and speechlesse tribes.  
 And thou in this shalt finde thy monument,  
 When tyrants crests and tombs of brasse are spent.

108

**W**hat's in the braine that Inck may character,  
 Which hath not figur'd to thee my true spirit,  
 What's new to speake, what now to register,  
 That may expresse my loue, or thy deare merit?  
 Nothing sweet boy, but yet like prayers diuine,

G 3

I must

SHAKESPEARES.

I must each day say ore the very same,  
 Counting no old thing old, thou mine, I thine,  
 Euen as when first I hallowed thy faire name.  
 So that eternall loue in loues fresh case,  
 Waighes not the dust and iniury of age,  
 Nor giues to necessary wrinkles place,  
 But makes antiquitie for aye his page,  
 Finding the first conceit of loue there bred,  
 Where time and outward forme would shew it dead,

109

**O** Neuer say that I was false of heart,  
 Though absence seem'd my flame to quallifie,  
 As easie might I from my selfe depart,  
 As from my soule which in thy brest doth lye:  
 That is my home of loue, if I haue rang'd,  
 Like him that trauels I returne againe,  
 Iust to the time, not with the time exchang'd,  
 So that my selfe bring water for my staine,  
 Neuer beleue though in my nature raign'd,  
 All frailties that besiege all kindes of blood,  
 That it could so preposterouslie be stain'd,  
 To leaue for nothing all thy summe of good:  
 For nothing this wide Vniuerse I call,  
 Saue thou my Rose, in it thou art my all.

110

**A** Las'tis true, I haue gone here and there,  
 And made my selfe a morley to the view,  
 Gor'd mine own thoughts, sold cheap what is most deare,  
 Made old offences of affections new.  
 Most true it is, that I haue lookt on truth  
 Asconce and strangely: But by all aboue,  
 These blenches gaue my heart an other youth,  
 And worse essaies prou'd thee my best of loue,  
 Now all is done, haue what shall haue no end,  
 Mine appetite I neuer more will grin'de  
 On newer prooffe, to trie an older friend,  
 A God in loue, to whom I am confin'd.

Then



# SONNETS.

Then giue me welcome next my heauen the best,  
Euen to thy pure and most most louing brest;

111

**O** For my sake doe you wish fortune chide,  
The guiltrie goddesse of my harmfull deeds,  
That did not better for my life prouide,  
Then publick meanes which publick manners breeds.  
Thence comes it that my name receiues a brand,  
And almost thence my nature is subdu'd  
To what it workes in, like the Dyers hand,  
Pitty me then, and with I were renu'de,  
Whilft like a willing pacient I will drinke,  
Potions of Eysell gainst my strong infection,  
No bitterneffe that I will bitter thinke,  
Nor double pennance to correct correction.  
Pittie me then deare friend, and I assure yee,  
Euen that your pittie is enough to cure mee.

112

**Y**our loue and pittie doth th'impresseion fill,  
Which vulgar scandall stamp't vpon my brow,  
For what care I who calles me well or ill,  
So you ore-greene my bad, my good allow?  
You are my All the world, and I must strue,  
To know my shames and praises from your tounge,  
None else to me, nor I to none aliue,  
That my steel'd sence or changes right or wrong,  
In so profound *Abisme* I throw all care  
Of others voyces, that my Adders sence,  
To cryttick and to flatterer stopped are:  
Marke how with my neglect I doe dispence,  
You are so strongly in my purpose bred,  
That all the world besides me thinks y'are dead.

113

**S**ince I left you, mine eye is in my minde,  
And that which gouernes me to goe about,  
Doth part his function, and is partly blind,

Seemes

SHAKESPEARES.

Seemes seeing, but effectually is out:  
 For it no forme deliuers to the heart  
 Of bird, of flowre, or shape which it doth lack,  
 Of his quick obiects hath the minde no part,  
 Nor his owne vision houlds what it doth catch:  
 For if it see the rud'st or gentlest sight,  
 The most sweet-fauor or deformedst creature,  
 The mountaine, or the sea, the day, or night:  
 The Croc, or Doue, it shapes them to your feature.  
 Incapable of more repleat, with you,  
 My most true minde thus maketh mine vntrue.

114

**O**R whether doth my minde being crown'd with you  
 Drinke vp the monarks plague this flattery?  
 Or whether shall I say mine eie saith true,  
 And that your loue taught it this *Alcumie*?  
 To make of monsters, and things indigest,  
 Such cherubines as your sweet selfe resemble,  
 Creating euery bad a perfect best  
 As fast as obiects to his beames assemble:  
 Oh tis the first, tis flattery in my seeing,  
 And my great minde most kingly drinks it vp,  
 Mine eie well knowes what with his gust is greening,  
 And to his pallat doth prepare the cup.  
 If it be poison'd, tis the lesser sinne,  
 That mine eye loues it and doth first beginne.

115

**T**Hose lines that I before haue writ doe lie,  
 Euen those that said I could not loue you deerer,  
 Yet then my iudgement knew no reason why,  
 My most full flame should afterwards burne cleerer.  
 But reckening time, whose milliond accidents  
 Creepe in twixt voves, and change decrees of Kings,  
 Tan sacred beautie, blunt the sharp'st intents,  
 Diuert strong mindes to th' course of altring things:  
 Alas why fearing of times tiranie,

Might

SONNETS.

Might I not then say now I loue you best,  
When I was certaine ore in-certainty,  
Crowning the present, doubting of the rest:  
Loue is a Babe, then might I not say so  
To giue full growth to that which still doth grow.

119

**L** Et me not to the marriage of true mindes  
Admit impediments, loue is not loue  
Which alters when it alteration findes,  
Or bends with the remouer to remoue.  
O no, it is an euer fixed marke  
That lookes on tempests and is neuer shaken;  
It is the star to euery wandring barke,  
Whose worths vnknowne, although his high be taken.  
Lou's not Times foole, though rosie lips and cheeks  
Within his bending sickles compasse come,  
Loue alters not with his breefe houres and weekes,  
But beares it out euen to the edge of doome:  
If this be error and vpon me proued,  
I neuer writ, nor no man euer loued.

117

**A** Ccuse me thus, that I haue scanted all,  
Wherein I should your great deserts repay,  
Forgot vpon your dearest loue to call,  
Whereto al bonds do tie me day by day,  
That I haue frequent binne with vnknown mindes,  
And giuen to time your owne deare purchas'd right,  
That I haue hoysted saile to al the windes  
Which should transport me farthest from your sight.  
Booke both my wilfulnesse and errors downe,  
And on iust prooffe surmise, accumulate,  
Bring me within the leuel of your frowne,  
But shoote not at me in your wakened hate:  
Since my appeale saies I did striue to prooue  
The constancy and virtue of your loue

H

118

**L**ike as to make our appetites more keene  
 With eager compounds we our pallat vrgē,  
 As to preuent our malladies vnseene,  
 We sicken to shun sicknesse when we purge.  
 Euen so being full of your nere cloying sweetnesse,  
 To bitter sawces did I frame my feedings;  
 And sicke of wel-fare found a kind of meetnesse,  
 To be diseas'd ere that there was true needing.  
 Thus pollicie in loue t'anticipate  
 The ills that were, not grew to faults assured,  
 And brought to medicine a healthfull state  
 Which rancke of goodnesse would by ill be cured.  
 But thence I learne and find the lesson true,  
 Drugs poyson him that so fell sicke of you.

**W**hat potions haue I drunke of *Syren* teares  
 Distil'd from Lymbecks foule as hell within,  
 Applying feares to hopes, and hopes to feares,  
 Still loosing when I saw my selfe to win?  
 What wretched errors hath my heart committed,  
 Whilst it hath thought it selfe so blessed neuer?  
 How haue mine eies out of their Spheares bene fitted  
 In the distraction of this madding feuer?  
 O benefit of ill, now I find true  
 That better is, by euil still made better.  
 And ruin'd loue when it is built anew  
 Growes fairer then at first, more strong, far greater.  
 So I returne rebuk't to my content,  
 And gaine by ills thrise more then I haue spent.

**T**hat you were once vnkind be-friends mee now,  
 And for that sorrow, which I then didde feele,  
 Needes must I vnder my transgression bow,  
 Vnlesse my Nerues were brasse or hammered Steele:  
 For if you were by my vnkindnesse shaken

SONNETS.

As I by yours, y'haue past a hell of Time,  
 And I a tyrant haue no leasure taken  
 To waigh how once I suffered in your crime.  
 O that our night of wo might haue remembered  
 My deepest tence, how hard true sorrow luts,  
 And soone to you, as you to me then tendred  
 The humble salue, which wounded bosomes fits!  
 But that your trespassse now becomes a fee,  
 Mine ransoms yours, and yours must ransom mee.

121

IT is better to be vile then vile esteemed,  
 When not to be, receiues reproach of being,  
 And the iust pleasure lost, which is so deemed,  
 Not by our feeling, but by others seeing.  
 For why should others false adulterat eyes  
 Giue salutation to my sportiue blood?  
 Or on my frailties why are frailer spies;  
 Which in their wils count bad what I think good?  
 Noe, I am that I am, and they that leuell  
 At my abuses, reckon vp their owne,  
 I may be straight though they them-selues be beuel  
 By their rancke thoughtes, my deedes must not be shown  
 Vnlesse this generall euill they maintaine,  
 All men are bad and in their badnesse raigne.

122.

Thy guift, thy tables, are within my braine  
 Full characterd with lasting memory,  
 Which shall aboue that idle rancke remaine  
 Beyond all date euen to eternity.  
 Or at the least, so long as braine and heart  
 Haue facultie by nature to subsist,  
 Til each to raz'd obliuion yeeld his part  
 Of thee, thy record neuer can be mist:  
 That poore retention could not so much hold,  
 Nor need I tallies thy deare loue to skore,  
 Therefore to giue them from me was I bold,

H 2

To

SHAKE-SPEARES

To trust those tables that receaue thee more,  
To keepe an adiunct to remember thee,  
Were to import forgetfulnesse in mee.

123

**N**O! Time, thou shalt not boast that I doe change,  
Thy pyramyds buylt vp with newer might  
To me are nothing nouell, nothing strange;  
They are but dressings of a former fight:  
Our dates are breefe, and therefor we admire,  
What thou dost foyst vpon vs that is ould,  
And rather make them borne to our desire,  
Then thinke that we before haue heard them tould:  
Thy registers and thee I both desie,  
Not wondring at the present, nor the past,  
For thy records, and what we see doth lye,  
Made more or les by thy continuall haist:  
This I doe vow and this shall euer be,  
I will be true dispiht thy syeth and thee.

124

**Y**F my deare loue were but the childe of state,  
It might for fortunes basterd be vnfathered,  
As subiect to times loue, or to times hate,  
Weeds among weeds, or flowers with flowers gatherd.  
No it was buylded far from accident,  
It suffers not in smilinge pomp, nor falls  
Vnder the blow of thrall'd discontent,  
Whereto th' inuiting time our fashien calls:  
It feares not policy that *Heriticke*,  
Which workes on leases of short numbred howers,  
But all alone stands hugely pollicitick,  
That it nor growes with heat, nor drownes with showres.  
To this I witnes call the soles of time,  
Which die for goodnes, who haue liu'd for crime.

125

**V**VEr't ought to me I bore the canopy,  
With my extern the outward honoring,

Or

# SONNETS.

Or layd great bates for eternity,  
Which proues more short then wast or ruining?  
Haue I not seene dwellers on forme and fauor  
Lose all, and more by paying too much rent  
For compound sweet; Forgoing simple fauor,  
Pittifull thriuors in their gazing spent.  
Noe, let me be obsequious in thy heart,  
And take thou my oblacion, poore but free,  
Which is not mixt with seconds, knows no art,  
But mutuall render, onely me for thee.  
Hence, thou subbornd *Informer*, a trew soule  
When most impeacht, stands least in thy controule.

126

O Thou my louely Boy who in thy power,  
Docst hold times fickle glasse, his fickle, hower:  
Who hast by wayning growne, and therein thou'lt,  
Thy louers withering, as thy sweet selfe grow'lt.  
If Nature (soueraine misteres ouer wrack)  
As thou goest onwards still will plucke thee backe,  
She keepes thee to this purpose, that her skill.  
May time disgrace, and wretched mynuit kill.  
Yet feare her O thou minnion of her pleasure,  
She may detaine, but not still keepe her trefure!  
Her *Audite* (though delayd) answer'd must be,  
And her *Quietus* is to render thee.

( )  
( )

127

I N the ould age blacke was not counted faire,  
Or if it weare it bore not beauties name:  
But now is blacke beauties successiue heire,  
And Beautie slanderd with a bastard shame,  
For since each hand hath put on Natures power,  
Fairing the foule with Arts faulse borrow'd face,  
Sweet beauty hath no name no holy boure,  
But is prophan'd, if not liues in disgrace.

H 3

Therefore

SHAKE-SPEARE'S

Therefore my Mistrisse eyes are Rauen blacke,  
Her eyes so suted, and they mourners seeme,  
At such who not borne faire no beauty lack,  
Slandring Creation with a false esteeme,  
Yet so they mourne becomming of their woe,  
That euery tounge saies beauty should looke so.

128

How oft when thou my musike inusike playst,  
Vpon that blessed wood whose motion sounds  
With thy sweet fingers when thou gently swayst,  
The wiry concord that mine eare confounds,  
Do I enuie those Iackes that nimble leape,  
To kisse the tender inward of thy hand,  
Whilst my poore lips which should that harue't reape,  
At the woods bouldnes by thee blushing stand.  
To be so tickled they would change their state,  
And situation with those dancing chips,  
Ore whome their fingers walke with gentle gate,  
Making dead wood more blest then liuing lips,  
Since faulie Iackes so happy are in this,  
Giue them their fingers, me thy lips to kisse.

129

Th'expence of Spirit in a waste of shame  
Is lust in action, and till action, lust  
Is periurd, murderous, blouddy full of blame,  
Sauage, extreame, rude, cruell, not to trust,  
Iniourd no sooner but dispised straight,  
Past reason hunted, and no sooner had  
Past reason hated as a swallowed bayt,  
On purpose layd to make the taker mad.  
Made In pursut and in possession so,  
Had, hauing, and in quest, to haue extreame,  
A blisse in prooffe and proud and very wo,  
Before a ioy proposd behind a dreame,  
All this the world well knowes yet none knowes well,  
To shun the heauen that leads men to this hell.

My



SONNETS.

130

**M**Y Mistres eyes are nothing like the Sunne,  
 Currall is farre more red, then her lips red,  
 If snow be white why then her breasts are dun:  
 If haire be wiers, black wiers grow on her head:  
 I haue scene Roses damaskt, red and white,  
 But no such Roses see I in her cheekes,  
 And in some perfumes is there mote delight,  
 Then in the breath that from my Mistres reekes.  
 I loue to heare her speake, yet well I know,  
 That Musicke hath a farre more pleasing sound:  
 I graunt I neuer saw a goddesse goe,  
 My Mistres when shee walkes treads on the ground.  
 And yet by heauen I thinke my loue as rare,  
 As any she belid with false compare.

131

**T**Hou art as tiranous, so as thou art,  
 As those whose beauties proudly make them cruel;  
 For well thou know'st to my deare dotting hart  
 Thou art the fairest and most precious Iewell.  
 Yet in good faith some say that thee behold,  
 Thy face hath not the power to make loue grone;  
 To say they erre, I dare not be so bold,  
 Although I sweare it to my selfe alone.  
 And to be sure that is not false I sweare  
 A thousand grones but thinking on thy face,  
 One on anothers necke do witnesse beare  
 Thy blacke is fairest in my iudgements place.  
 In nothing art thou blacke saue in thy deeds,  
 And thence this slander as I thinke proceeds.

132

**T**Hine eies I loue, and they as pittying me,  
 Knowing thy heart torment me with disdain,  
 Haue put on black, and louing mourners bee,  
 Looking with pretty ruth vpon my paine.

And

SHAKE-SPEARES

And truly not the morning Sun of Heauen  
 Better becomes the gray cheeks of th' East,  
 Nor that full Starre that vsuers in the Eauen  
 Doth halfe that glory to the sober West  
 As those two morning eyes become thy face:  
 O let it then as well beleeue thy heart  
 To mourne for me since mourning doth thee grace,  
 And sute thy pittie like in euery part.  
 Then will I sweare beauty her selfe is blacke,  
 And all they foule that thy complexion lacke.

133

**B**eshrew that heart that makes my heart to groane  
 For that deepe wound it giues my friend and me;  
 I't not ynough to torture me alone,  
 But slaue to slavery my sweet'st friend must be.  
 Me from my selfe thy cruell eye hath taken,  
 And my next selfe thou harder hast ingrossed,  
 Of him, my selfe, and thee I am forsaken,  
 A torment thrice three-fold thus to be crossed:  
 Prison my heart in thy Steele bosomes warde,  
 But then my friends heart let my poore heart bale,  
 Who ere keepes me, let my heart be his garde,  
 Thou canst not then vse rigor in my laile.  
 And yet thou wilt, for I being pent in thee,  
 Perforce am thine and all that is in me.

134

**S**o now I haue confest that he is thine,  
 And I my selfe am morgag'd to thy will,  
 My selfe Ile forfeit, so that other mine,  
 Thou wilt restore to be my comfort still:  
 But thou wilt not, nor he will not be free,  
 For thou art couetous, and he is kinde,  
 He learnd but suretie-like to write for me,  
 Vnder that bond that him as fast doth binde.  
 The statute of thy beauty thou wilt take,  
 Thou vsurer that put'st forth all to vse,

And

# SONNETS.

And sue a friend, came debter for my sake,  
 So him I loose through my vnkinde abuse.  
 Him haue I lost, thou hast both him and me,  
 He paies the whole, and yet am I not free.

135

**W**Ho euer hath her wish, thou hast thy *Will*,  
 And *Will* too boote, and *Will* in ouer-plus,  
 More then enough am I that vex thee still,  
 To thy sweet will making addition thus.  
 Wilt thou whose will is large and sparious,  
 Not once vouchsafe to hide my will in thine,  
 Shall will in others seeme right gracious,  
 And in my will no faire acceptance shine:  
 The sea all water, yet receiues raine still,  
 And in abundance addeth to his store,  
 So thou beeing rich in *Will* adde to thy *Will*,  
 One will of mine to make thy large *Will* more.  
 Let no vnkinde, no faire beseechers kill,  
 Thinke all but one, and me in that one *Will*.

136

**I**F thy soule check thee that I come so neere,  
 I Swear to thy blind soule that I was thy *Will*,  
 And will thy soule knowes is admitted there,  
 Thus farre for loue, my loue-sute sweet fullfill.  
*Will*, will fulfill the treasure of thy loue,  
 I fill it full with wils, and my will one,  
 In things of great receipt with ease we prooue,  
 Among a number one is reckon'd none.  
 Then in the number let me passe vtold,  
 Though in thy stores account I one must be,  
 For nothing hold me, so it please thee hold,  
 That nothing me, a some-thing sweet to thee.  
 Make but my name thy loue, and loue that still,  
 And then thou louest me for my name is *Will*.

137

**T**Hou blinde foole loue, what doost thou to mine eyes,  
 I  
 That

# SHAKE-SPEARES

That they behold and see not what they see :  
 They know what beantie is, see where it lyes,  
 Yet what the best is, take the worst to be.  
 If eyes corrupt by ouer-partiall lookes,  
 Be anchord in the baye where all men ride,  
 Why of eyes falsehood hast thou forged hookes,  
 Whereto the iudgement of my heart is tide?  
 Why should my heart thinke that a seuerall plot,  
 Which my heart knowes the wide worlds common place?  
 Or mine eyes seeing this, say this is not  
 To put faire truth vpon so foule a face,  
 In things right true my heart and eyes haue erred,  
 And to this false plague are they now transferred.

138

**W**hen my loue sweares that she is made of truth,  
 I do belecue her though I know she lyes,  
 That she might thinke me some vntuterd youth,  
 Vnlearned in the worlds false subtilties.  
 Thus vainely thinking that she thinkes me young,  
 Although she knowes my dayes are past the best,  
 Simply I credit her false speaking tongue,  
 On both sides thus is simple truth suppress:  
 But wherefore sayes she not she is vniust?  
 And wherefore say not I that I am old?  
 O loues best habit is in seeming trust,  
 And age in loue, loues not t'haue yeares told:  
 Therefore I lye with her, and she with me,  
 And in our faults by iyes we flattered be.

139

**O** Call not me to iustifie the wrong,  
 That thy vnkindnesse layes vpon my heart,  
 Wound me not with thine eye but with thy tongue,  
 Vie power with power, and slay me not by Art,  
 Tell me thou lou'st else-where; but in my sight,  
 Deare heart forbeare to glance thine eye aside,  
 What needst thou wound with cunning when thy might  
 Is

# SONNETS.

Is more then my ore-prest defence can bide?  
 Let me excuse thee, ah my loue well knowes,  
 Her prettie lookes haue beene mine enemies,  
 And therefore from my face she turnes my foes,  
 That they else-where might dart their iniuries :  
 Yet do not so, but since I am neere slaine,  
 Kill me out-right with lookes, and rid my paine.

140

**B**E wise as thou art cruell, do not presse  
 My tounge-tide patience with too much disdain :  
 Least sorrow lend me words and words expresse,  
 The manner of my pittie wanting paine.  
 If I might teach thee witte better it weare,  
 Though not to loue, yet loue to tell me so,  
 As testie sick-men when their deaths be neere,  
 No newes but health from their Phisitions know.  
 For if I should dispaire I should grow madde,  
 And in my madnesse might speake ill of thee,  
 Now this ill wresting world is growne so bad,  
 Madde slanderers by madde eares beleeued be.  
 That I may not be so, nor thou be lyde, (wide  
 Beare thine eyes straight, though thy proud heart goe

141

**I**N faith I doe not loue thee with mine eyes,  
 For they in thee a thousand errors note,  
 But 'tis my heart that loues what they dispise,  
 Who in dispight of view is pleas'd to dote.  
 Nor are mine eares with thy tounge's tune delighted,  
 Nor tender feeling to base touches prone,  
 Nor taste, nor smell, desire to be inuited  
 To any sensuall feast with thee alone :  
 But my five wits, nor my five senses can  
 Diswade one foolish heart from seruing thee,  
 Who leaues vnswai'd the likenesse of a man,  
 Thy proud hearts slaue and vassall wretch to be :  
 Onely my plague thus farre I count my gaine,  
 That she that makes me sinne, awards me paine.

I 2

Loue

142

**L**oue is my sinne, and thy deare vertue hate,  
 Hate of my sinne, grounded on sinfull louing,  
 O but with mine, compare thou thine owne state,  
 And thou shalt finde it meritts not reproofing,  
 Or if it do, not from those lips of thine,  
 That haue prophan'd their scarlet ornaments,  
 And seald false bonds of loue as oft as mine,  
 Robd others beds reuenues of their rents.  
 Be it lawfull I loue thee as thou lou'lt those.  
 Whome thine eyes wooe as mine importune thee,  
 Roote pittie in thy heart that when it growes,  
 Thy pittie may deserue to pittied bee.  
 If thou doost seeke to haue what thou doost hide,  
 By selfe example mai'tt thou be denide.

143

**L**oe as a carefull hufwife runnes to catch,  
 One of her fethered creatures broake away,  
 Sets downe her babe and makes all swift dispatch  
 In pursuit of the thing she would haue stay:  
 Whilst her neglected child holds her in chace,  
 Cries to catch her whose busie care is beht,  
 To follow that which flies before her face:  
 Not prizing her poore infants discontent;  
 So runst thou after that which flies from thee,  
 Whilst I thy babe chace thee a farre behind,  
 But if thou catch thy hope turne back to me:  
 And play the mothers part kisse me, be kind.  
 So will I pray that thou mai'st haue thy *Will*,  
 If thou turne back and my loude crying still.

144

**T**wo loues I haue of comfort and dispaire,  
 Which like two spirits do sugiest me still,  
 The better angell is a man right faire:  
 The worser spirit a woman collour'd il.  
 To win me soone to hell my femall euill,

Tempteth

# SONNETS.

Tempteth my better angel from my sight,  
 And would corrupt my saint to be a diuel:  
 Wooing his purity with her fowle pride.  
 And whether that my angel be turn'd finde,  
 Suspect I may, yet not directly tell,  
 But being both from me both to each friend,  
 I gesse one angel in an others hel.  
 Yet this shal I nere know but liue in doubt,  
 Till my bad angel fire my good one out.

145

**T**Hose lips that Loues owne hand did make,  
 Breath'd forth the sound that said I hate,  
 To me that languisht for her sake:  
 But when she saw my wofull state,  
 Straight in her heart did mercie come,  
 Chiding that tongue that euer sweet,  
 Was vsde in giuing gentle dome:  
 And tought it thus a new to greete:  
 I hate she alterd with an end,  
 That follow'd it as gentle day,  
 Doth follow night who like a fiend  
 From heauen to hell is flowne away.  
 I hate, from hate away she threw,  
 And sau'd my life saying not you.

146

**P**Oore soule the center of my sinfull earth,  
 My sinfull earth these rebbell powres that thee array,  
 Why dost thou pine within and suffer dearth?  
 Painting thy outward walls so costlie gay?  
 Why so large cost hauing so short a lease,  
 Dost thou vpon thy fading mansion spend?  
 Shall wormes inheritors of this excesse,  
 Eate vp thy charge? is this thy bodies end?  
 Then soule liue thou vpon thy seruants losse,  
 And let that pine to aggrauat thy store;  
 Buy tearmes diuine in selling houres of drosse:

13

Within

SHAKE-SPEARES

Within be fed, without be rich no more,  
So shalt thou feed on death, that feeds on men,  
And death once dead, ther's no more dying then.

147

**M**Y loue is as a feauer longing still,  
For that which longer nurseth the disease,  
Feeding on that which doth preserue the ill,  
Th' vncertaine sicklie appetite to please:  
My reason the Phisition to my loue,  
Angry that his prescriptions are not kept  
Hath left me, and I desperate now approoue,  
Desire is death, which Phisick did except.  
Past cure I am, now Reason is past care,  
And frantick madde with euer-more vnrrest,  
My thoughts and my discourse as mad mens are,  
At randon from the truth vainely exprest.  
For I haue sworne thee faire, and thought thee bright,  
Who art as black as hell, as darke as night.

148

**O** Me! what eyes hath loue put in my head,  
Which haue no correspondence with true sight,  
Or if they haue, where is my iudgment fled,  
That censures falsely what they see aright?  
If that be faire whereon my false eyes dote,  
What meanes the world to say it is not so?  
If it be not, then loue doth well denote,  
Loues eye is not so true as all mens: no,  
How can it? O how can loues eye be true,  
That is so vext with watching and with teares?  
No maruaile then though I mistake my view,  
The sunne it selfe sees not, till heauen cleeres.  
O cunning loue, with teares thou keepst me blinde,  
Least eyes well seeing thy foule faults should finde.

149

**C**ANst thou O cruell, say I loue thee not,  
When I against my selfe with thee pertake:

Doc



# SONNETS.

Doe I not thinke on thee when I forgot  
 Am of my selfe, all tirant for thy sake?  
 Who hateth thee that I doe call my friend,  
 On whom frownst thou that I doe saue vpon,  
 Nay if thou lovest on me doe I not spend  
 Reuenge vpon my selfe with present monie  
 What merit do I in my selfe respect,  
 That is so proude thy seruice to dispise,  
 When a'l my best doth worship thy defect,  
 Commanded by the motion of thine eyes.  
 But loue hate on for now I know thy minde,  
 Those that can see thou lou'st, and I am blind.

150

OH from what powre hast thou this powrefull might,  
 VVith insufficiency my heart to fix,  
 To make me giue the lie to my true sight,  
 And sweere that brightnesse doth not grace the day?  
 Whence hast thou this becomming of things ill,  
 That in the very refuse of thy deeds,  
 There is such strength and warrantie of skill,  
 That in my minde thy worst all best exceeds?  
 Who taught thee how to make me loue thee more,  
 The more I heare and see iust cause of hate,  
 Oh though I loue what others doe abhor,  
 VVith others thou shouldst not abhor my state.  
 If thy vnworthinesse raisd loue in me,  
 More worthy I to be belou'd of thee.

151

LOue is too young to know what conscience is,  
 Yet who knows not conscience is borne of loue,  
 Then gentle cheater vrge not my amisse,  
 Least guilty of my faults thy sweet selfe proue.  
 For thou betraying me, I doe betray  
 My nobler part to my grosse bodie treason,  
 My soule doth tell my body that he may,  
 Triumph in loue, flesh staies no farther reason,

But

SHAKE-SPEARES

But ryſing at thy name doth point out thee,  
As his triumphant prize, proud of this pride,  
He is contented thy poore drudge to be  
To ſtand in thy affaires, fall by thy ſide.  
No want of conſcience hold it that I call,  
Her loue, for whoſe deare loue I riſe and fall.

152

**I**N louing thee thou know'ſt I am forſworne,  
But thou art twice forſworne to me loue ſwearing,  
In aſt thy bed-vow broake and new faith torne,  
In vowing new hate after new loue bearing:  
But why of two othes breach doe I accuſe thee,  
When I breake twenty: I am periur'd moſt,  
For all my vowes are othes but to miſuſe thee:  
And all my honeſt faith in thee is loſt.  
For I haue ſworne deepe othes of thy deepe kindneſſe:  
Othes of thy loue, thy truth, thy conſtancie,  
And to inlighten thee gaue eyes to blindneſſe,  
Or made them ſwere againſt the thing they ſee.  
For I haue ſworne thee faire: more periurde eye,  
To ſwere againſt the truth ſo foule a lie.

153

**C***V*pid laid by his brand and fell a ſleepe,  
A maide of *Dyans* this aduantage found,  
And his loue-kindling fire did quickly ſteepe  
In a could vallie-fontaine of that ground:  
Which borrowd from this holie fire of loue,  
A dateleſſe liuely heat ſtill to indure,  
And grew a ſeething bath which yet men proue,  
Againſt ſtrang malladies a ſoueraigne cure:  
But at my miſtres eie loues brand new fired,  
The boy for triall needes would rouch my breaſt,  
I ſick withall the helpe of bath deſired,  
And thether hied a ſad diſtemperd gueſt.  
But found no cure, the bath for my helpe lies,  
Where *Cupid* got new fire; my miſtres eye.

SONNETS.

154

**T**He little Loue-God lying once a sleepe,  
Laid by his side his heart inflaming brand,  
Whilst many Nymphes that vou'd chaste life to keep,  
Came tripping by, but in her maiden hand,  
The sayrest votary tooke vp that fire,  
Which many Legions of true hearts had warm'd,  
And so the Generall of hot desire,  
Was sleeping by a Virgin hand disarm'd.  
This brand she quenched in a coole Well by,  
Which from loues fire tooke heat perpetuall,  
Growing a bath and healthfull remedy,  
For men diseasd, but I my Mistrisse thrall,  
Came there for cure and this by that I proue,  
Loues fire heates water, water cooles not loue.

FINIS.

K

A

## A Louers complaint.

BY

WILLIAM SHAKE-SPEARE.

**F**Rom off a hill whose concaue wombe reworded,  
A plaintfull story from a sistring valed  
My spirits t'attend this dolefull voyce accorded,  
And downe I laid to list the sad tun'd tale,  
Ere long espied a fickle maid full pale  
Tearing of papers breaking rings a twaine,  
Storming her world with sorrowes, wind and raine.

Vpon her head a plattid hieue of straw,  
Which fortified her visage from the Sunne,  
Whereon the thought might thinke sometime it saw  
The carkas of a beauty spent and donne,  
Time had not fished all that youth begun,  
Nor youth all quit, but spight of heauens fell rage,  
Some beauty pcept, through lettice of tear'd age.

Oft did she heaue her Napkin to her eyne,  
Which on it had conceited charecters:  
Laundring the silken figures in the brine,  
That seasoned woe had pelleted in teares,  
And often reading what contents it beares:  
As often shriking vndistinguish'd wo,  
In clamours of all size both high and low.

Some-times her leueld eyes their carriage ride,  
As they did battry to the spheres intend:  
Sometime diuerted their poore balls are tide,  
To th'orbed earth; sometimes they do extend,  
Their view right on, anon their gales lend,

To

## COMPLAINT

To euery place at once and no where fixt,  
The mind and sight distractedly commixt.

Her haire nor loose nor ti'd in formall plat,  
Proclaimd in her a carelesse hand of pride;  
For some vntuck'd descended her sheu'd hat,  
Hanging her pale and pined cheeke beside,  
Some in her threedden fillet still did bide,  
And trew to bondage would not breake from thence,  
Though slackly braided in loose negligence.

A thousand fauours from a maund she drew,  
Of amber christall and of bedded let,  
Which one by one she in a riuer threw,  
Vpon whose weeping margent she was set,  
Like vsery applying wet to wet,  
Or Monarches hands that lets not bounty fall,  
Where want cries some; but where excesse begs all.

Offolded schedulls had she many a one,  
Which she perus'd, sigh'd, tore and gaue the flud,  
Crackt many a ring of Posied gold and bone,  
Bidding them find their Sepulchers in mud,  
Found yet mo letters sadly pend in blood,  
With sleided filke, feare and affectedly  
Enswath'd and seald to curious secrecy.

These often bath'd she in her fluxiue eies,  
And often kist, and often gaue to teare,  
Cried O false blood thou register of lies,  
What vnapproued wirnes doost thou beare!  
Inke would haue seem'd more blacke and damned heare;  
This said in top of rage the lines she rents,  
Big discontent, so breaking their contents.

A reuerend man that graz'd his cattell ny,

## A LOVERS

Sometime a blus<sup>r</sup>erer that the ruffle knew  
Of Court of Cittie, and had let go by  
The swiftest houres obserued as they flew,  
Towards this afflicted fancy fastly drew:  
And priuilegd by age desires to know  
In breese the grounds and motiues of her wo.

So slides he downe vppon his greyned bar;  
And comely distant sits he by her side,  
When hee againe desires her, being satte,  
Her grecuance with his hearing to deuide:  
If that from him there may be ought applied  
Which may her suffering extasie asswage  
Tis promitt in the charitie of age.

Father she saies, though in mee you behold  
The iniury of many a blasting houre;  
Let it not tell your Iudgement I am old,  
N<sup>t</sup> age, but sorrow, ouer me hath power;  
I might as yet haue bene a sprcading flower  
Fresh to my selfe, if I had selfe applied  
Loue to my selfe, and to no Loue beside.

But wo is mee, too early I attended  
A youthfull suit it was to gaine my grace;  
O one by natures outwards so commended,  
That maidens eyes stucke ouer all his face,  
Loue lackt a dwelling and made him her place.  
And when in his faire parts shee didde abide,  
Shee was new lodg'd and newly Deified.

His browny locks did hang in crooked curles,  
And euery light occasion of the wind  
Vpon his lippes their silken parcels hurles,  
Whats sweet to do, to do wil aptly find,  
Each eye that saw him did inchaunt the minde:

For

## COMPLAINT

For on his visage was in little drawne,  
What largeness thinkes in parradise was sawne.

Small shew of man was yet vpon his chinne,  
His phenix downe began but to appeare  
Like vnshorne veluet, on that termlesse skin  
Whose bare out-brag'd the web it seem'd to were,  
Yet shewed his visage by that cost more deare,  
And nice affections wauering stood in doubt  
If best were as it was, or best without.

His qualities were beautilous as his forme,  
For maiden tongu'd he was and thereof free;  
Yet if men mou'd him, was he such a storme  
As oft twixt May and Aprill is to see,  
When windes breath sweet, vnruely though they bee.  
His rudenesse so with his authoriz'd youth,  
Did liucry falsenesse in a pride of truth.

Wel could hee ride, and often men would say  
That horse his mettell from his rider takes  
Proud of subiection, noble by the swaie, (makes  
What rounds, what bounds, what course what stop he  
And controuersie hence a question takes,  
Whether the horse by him became his deed,  
Or he his mannad'g, by'th wel doing Steed.

But quickly on this side the verdict went,  
His reall habitude gaue life and grace  
To appertainings and to ornament,  
Accomplisht in him-selfe not in his case:  
All ayds them-selues made fairer by their place,  
Can for addicions, yet their purpos'd trimme  
Peec'd not his grace but were al grac'd by him.

So on the tip of his subduing tongue

## A L O V E R S

All kinde of arguments and question deepe,  
Al replication prompt, and reason strong  
For his aduantage still did wake and sleep,  
To make the weeper laugh, the laughter weeper  
He had the dialect and different skil,  
Catching al passions in his craft of will.

That hee didde in the general bosome raigne  
Of young, of old, and sexes both enchanted,  
To dwel with him in thoughts, or to remaine  
In personal duty, following where he haunted,  
Consent's bewicht, ere he desire haue granted,  
And dialogu'd for him what he would say,  
Askt their own wils and made their wils obey.

Many there were that did his picture gette  
To serue their eies, and in it put their mind,  
Like fooles that in th' imagination set  
The goodly objects which abroad they find  
Of lands and mansions, theirs in thought assign'd,  
And labouring in mee pleasures to bestow them,  
Then the true gouty Land-lord which doth owe them.

So many haue that neuer toucht his hand  
Sweetly suppos'd them mistresse of his heart:  
My wofull selfe that did in freedome stand,  
And was my owne fee simple (not in part)  
What with his art in youth and youth in art  
Threw my affections in his charmed power,  
Referu'd the stalke and gaue him al my flower.

Yet did I not as some my equals did  
Demaund of him, nor being desired yeelded,  
Finding my selfe in honour so forbidde,  
With safest distance I mine honour sheelded,  
Experience for me many bulwarkes builded



### COMPLAINT.

Of proofs new bleeding which remaind the foile  
Of this false lewell, and his amorous spoile.

But ah who euer shun'd by precedent,  
The destin'd ill she must her selfe assay,  
Or forc'd examples gainst her owne content  
To put the by-past perills in her way?  
Counsaile may stop a while what will not stay:  
For when we rage, aduise is often scene  
By blunting vs to make our wits more keene.

Nor giues it satisfaction to our blood,  
That wee must curbe it vpon others prooffe,  
To be forbod the sweets that seemes so good,  
For feare of harines that preach in our behoofe;  
O appetite from iudgement stand aloofe!  
The one a pallate hath that needs will taste,  
Though reason weepe and cry it is thy last.

For further I could say this mans vntrue,  
And knew the patternes of his foule beguiling,  
Heard where his plants in others Orchards grew,  
Saw how deceits were guilded in his smiling,  
Knew vowes, were euer brokers to defiling,  
Thought Characters and words meerly but art,  
And bastards of his foule adulterat heart.

And long vpon these termes I held my Citty,  
Till thus hee gan besiege me : Gentle maid  
Haue of my suffering youth some feeling pittie  
And be not of my holy vowes affraid,  
Thats to ye sworne to none was euer said,  
For feasts of loue I haue bene call'd vnto  
Till now did nere inuite nor neuer voyv.

All my offences that abroad you see

## A L O V E R S

Are errors of the blood none of the mind:  
Loue made them not, with aſſure they may be,  
Where neither Party is nor trew nor kind,  
They ſought their ſhame that ſo their ſhame did find,  
And ſo much leſſe of ſhame in me remaines,  
By how much of me their reproch containes,

Among the many that mine eyes haue ſeene,  
Not one whoſe flame my hart ſo much as warmed,  
Or my affection put to th, ſmalleſt teene,  
Or any of my leiſures euer Charmed,  
Harne haue I done to them but nere was harmed,  
Kept hearts in liueries, but mine owne was free,  
And raignd commaunding in his monarchy.

Looke heare what tributes wounded fancies ſent me,  
Of palyd pearles and rubies red as blood;  
Figuring that they their paſſions likewise lent me  
Of greeſe and bluſhes, aptly vnderſtood  
In bloodleſſe white, and the encrimſon'd mood,  
Effects of terror and deare modeſty,  
Encampt in hearts but fighting outwardly.

And Lo behold theſe tallents of their heir,  
With twiſted mettle amouſly empleacht  
I haue receau'd from many a ſeuerall faire,  
Their kind acceptance, wepingly beſeecht,  
With th'annexions of faire gems inricht,  
And deepe brain'd ſonnets that did amplifie  
Each ſtones deare Nature, worth and quallity.

The Diamond? why twas beautifull and hard,  
Whereto his inuiſ'd properties did tend,  
The deepe greene Emrald in whoſe freſh regard,  
Weake ſights their ſickly radiance do amend.  
The heauen hewd Saphir and the Opall blend

With

### COMPLAINT.

With obiects manyfold; each severall stone,  
With wit well blazond simil'd or made some mone.

Lo all these trophies of affections hot,  
Of pensu'd and subdew'd desires the tender,  
Nature hath chargd me that I hoord them not,  
But yeeld them vp where I my selfe must render:  
That is to you my origin and ender:  
For these of force must your oblations be,  
Since I their Aulter, you enpatrone me.

Oh then aduance (of yours) that phrazeles hand,  
Whose white weighes downe the airy scale of praise,  
Take all these similies to your owne command,  
Hollowed with sighes that burning lunges did raise:  
What me your minister for you obaies  
Workes vnder you, and to your audit comes  
Their distract parcells, in combined summes.

Lo this deuice was sent me from a Nun,  
Or Sister sanctified of holiest note,  
Which late her noble suit in court did thun,  
Whose rarest hauings made the blossoms dote,  
For she was sought by spirits of ritcheft core,  
But kept cold distance, and did thence remoue,  
To spend her liuing in eternall loue.

But oh my sweet what labour ist to leaue,  
The thing we haue not, mastring what not striues,  
Playing the Place which did no forme receiue,  
Playing patient sports in vnconstrained giues,  
She that her fame so to her selfe contriues,  
The scarres of battaile scapeth by the flight,  
And makes her absence valiant, not her might.

Oh pardon me in that my boast is true,

## A LOVERS

The accident which brought me to her eie,  
Vpon the moment did her force subdewe,  
And now she would the caged cloister flie:  
Religious loue put out religions eye:  
Not to be tempted would she be enur'd,  
And now to tempt all liberty procure.

How mightie then you are, Oh heare me tell,  
The broken bosoms that to me belong,  
Haue emptied all their fountaines in my well:  
And mine I powre your Ocean all amonge:  
I strong ore them and you ore me being strong,  
Must for your victorie vs all congett,  
As compound loue to phisick your cold brest.

My parts had powre to charme a sacred Sunne,  
Who disciplin'd I dieted in grace,  
Belecu'd her eies, when they t' assaile begun,  
All vowes and consecrations giuing place:  
O most potentiall loue, vowe, bond, nor space  
In thee hath neither sting, knot, nor confine  
For thou art all and all things els are thine.

When thou impressst what are precepts worth  
Of stale example? when thou wilt inflame,  
How coldly those impediments stand forth  
Of wealth of filliall feare, lawe, kindred fame, (shame  
Loues armes are peace, gainst rule, gainst sence, gainst  
And sweetens in the suffering pangues it beares,  
The *Alloes* of all forces, shockes and feares.

Now all these hearts that doe on mine depend,  
Feeling it breake, with bleeding groanes they pine,  
And supplicant their sighes to you extend  
To leaue the battrie that you make gainst mine,  
Lending soft audience, to my sweet designe,

And

### COMPLAINT.

And credent soule, to that strong bonded oth,  
That shall preferre and vndertake my troth.

This said, his watric eies he did dismount,  
Whose sightes till then were leaueld on my face,  
Each cheeke a riuer running from a fount,  
With brynish currant downe-ward flowed a pace:  
Oh how the channell to the streame gaue grace!  
Who glaz'd with Christail gate the glowing Roses,  
That flame through water which their hew incloses,

Oh father, what a hell of witch-craft lies,  
In the small orb of one perticular teare?  
Put with the inuasion of the eies:  
What rocky heart to water will not weare?  
What brest so cold that is not warmed heare,  
Or cleft effect, cold modesty hot wrath:  
Both fire from hence, and chill extincture hath.

For loe his passion but an art of craft,  
Euen there resolu'd my reason into teares,  
There my white stole of chastity I daft,  
Shooke off my sober gardes, and ciuill feares,  
Appeare to him as he to me appears:  
All melting, though our drops this difference bore,  
His poison'd me, and mine did him restore.

In him a plenitude of subtile matter,  
Applied to Cautills, all straining formes receiues,  
Of burning blushes, or of weeping water,  
Or sounding palenesse: and he takes and leaues,  
In eithers aptnesse as it best deceiues:  
To blush at speeches ranck, to weepe at woes  
Or to turne white and found at tragick shoves.

That not a heart which in his leuell came,

L 2

Could

## THE LOVERS

Could scape the haile of his all hurting'ayme,  
Shewing faire Nature is both kinde and tame :  
And vaild in them did winne whom he would maime,  
Against the thing he sought, he would exclaime,  
When he most burnt in hart-wisht luxurie,  
He preacht pure maide, and praids cold chastitie.

Thus meere with the garment of a grace,  
The naked and concealed feind he couerd,  
That th'vnexperient gaue the tempter place,  
Which like a Cherubin about them houer'd,  
Who young and simple would not be so louerd.  
Aye me I fell, and yet do question make,  
What I should doe againe for such a sake.

O that infected moysture of his eye,  
O that false fire which in his cheeke so glowd :  
O that forc'd thunder from his heart did flye,  
O that sad breath his spungie lungs bestowed,  
O all that borrowed motion seeming owed,  
Would yet againe betray the fore-betrayed,  
And new peruert a reconciled Maide.

## FINIS.











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